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Our Pope not Antichrist



BY THE BISHOP OF VERMONT

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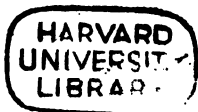
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A CANDID EXAMINATION
OF THE QUESTION
Whether the Pope of Rome
IS THE
Great Antichrist of Scripture.

BY THE LATE RT. REV.
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Editor's Preface.

THIS little Treatise was begun in the Spring of the year 1866, immediately after "The Law of Ritualism" was finished; but was not completed until the beginning of the year 1867. It never received the last corrections of the Author, who intended, before publishing his own conclusions, to include a careful analysis of what has been said both by Dr. Döllinger and Archdeacon Wordsworth on the subject. But though not quite so full a discussion as he might have made it, had his life been spared, it will still be received kindly by his many friends. It will be found useful in aiding Churchmen to carry on our inevitable controversy with Rome with less of that abusive rancor, so dear to some Protestants—a rancor couched in Scripture phrases, which must first be perverted from their true meaning, before they can be prostituted for the maintenance of a bitterness unworthy of Christians.

J. H. H., Jr.

BURLINGTON, VERMONT,
Feast of St. Bartholomew, 1868.

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Introduction.

THE famous St. Augustine, who is justly styled the Prince of the Fathers, set an admirable example of candor in his "Retractions," where he frankly acknowledged that on several subjects treated in his former works, his mind had afterwards adopted a different conclusion. If so eminent a Master in Israel had occasion for such an avowal, how little hesitation should be felt by a modern author like myself, whose name, in comparison, is so utterly insignificant, when an erroneous opinion, published long ago, is discovered to be a mistake, calling for correction.

Nearly thirteen years have elapsed since the issue of "The End of Controversy Controverted," — a work devoted to a thorough discussion of the innovations which the Church of Rome had brought in upon the primitive faith, as they were set forth, with great ingenuity and address, in the well-known book of Dr. Milner, called, "The End of Controversy." In revising and correcting those volumes for a fourth edition,¹ I found it necessary to omit a chapter, which I had written in defence of the popular idea amongst Protestants, that the Pope is the great Antichrist of Scripture. I had adopted this opinion mainly from the Treatise on the Prophecies by Bishop Newton, and had no doubt, at the time, that it was the correct view of the question. But on a subsequent and full examination of the point, I became convinced that I was mistaken. And I considered it a plain duty to with-

¹ It is hoped that this Fourth Edition of *The End of Controversy Controverted* — which contains many other alterations and corrections besides the one here specified — may be issued within a year. — EDITOR.

draw, so far as my humble name was concerned, a charge which I was no longer able, conscientiously, to sustain.

I am quite ready to confess, indeed, that this duty is not agreeable to the natural love of consistency, which every author, however unimportant he may be, would desire to cherish. But in a writer on religious subjects, above all men, the honest adherence to truth should be the great principle of action, for he has a special account to render before that divine Redeemer who is the Truth itself. No man need feel ashamed because he once adopted a popular mistake, and had occasion to change his opinion after a thorough investigation. He ought only to be ashamed if his pride of character should be allowed to prevent the frank acknowledgment of error.

Notwithstanding, however, my matured judgment repudiates my former opinion that the Pope of Rome is the great Antichrist of Scripture, it is but an act of justice to the numerous writers on the other side that we should remember the current of respectable authority in their favor. Thus Gregory, surnamed the Great, as early as the sixth century, opposing the ambitious claims of John the Patriarch of Constantinople, expressly saith, "I assert confidently that whoever calls himself the universal bishop, or desires to be so called, is the forerunner of Antichrist in his pride, because he exalts himself proudly above others." In the tenth century, Arnulphus, the Bishop of Orleans, when sitting as the President of a Council, applied the term Antichrist to the Pope of Rome. Fluentius, the Bishop of Florence, in the twelfth century, taught publicly that Antichrist was come into the world. Joachim, the famous Abbot of Calabria, asserted the same fact, and added, that Antichrist would be exalted to the Poppedom. The term was used currently in the Church of Rome itself, whenever kings or cardinals were roused to resist the papal despotism. And among the Waldenses, the notion that the Pope was Antichrist became an established doctrine. It was no in-

vention, therefore, of Luther and the other Reformers, nor of the Protestant authors who succeeded them. On the contrary, the same application of this odious word was made currently for many ages before their time ; and few mistakes on any religious question could claim a larger number of adherents, or be sustained by a more plausible course of prophetic and historical interpretation.

But the admirable men who, under Providence, conducted the English Reformation, wisely abstained from placing this charge among our standards of doctrine. We have questions enough of controversy with the Church of Rome, independently of this ; and the interests of truth and righteousness cannot derive any real advantage from an addition which is incapable of a satisfactory demonstration. I consider myself, therefore, as not only fulfilling my duty to the truth, in the correction of an unconscious error on my own part, but also as justifying the Church of England in her omission of this topic, notwithstanding the provocation received from the papal sovereigns, in the sixteenth century, under every form of assault, whether religious or political.

In this duty, however, of correcting my own unconscious error, the assignment of my reasons is properly included. And therefore I have undertaken a considerable amount of labor in preparing the present work, in order to show *why* I have felt obliged to abandon my former opinion. My attention was called to the subject by a little book which was kindly given to me by one of my brethren, containing "Eight Lectures on Prophecy," delivered in London, and displaying much vigor and ability. In this, which is quite a recent publication, and evidently from the Evangelical School, I was surprised to find a clear denial that the Pope is the great Antichrist. The common opinion was treated as an absolute mistake, and as I had formerly adopted it, I began at once a thorough examination of the question, the result of which is here placed before the reader. As in all

other matters of controversy among Christian churches, my appeal will be made first to the Scriptures, and secondly, to the Fathers, concluding with a consideration of certain incongruities which are necessarily involved in the contrary hypothesis. And I trust that my friends, who have taken so kind an interest in my reply to the work of Dr. Milner, will not only be gratified to find the former error rectified in the fourth and revised edition, but will also read with satisfaction this essay on a subject which has not, for many years, received any serious attention.

First Chapter.

The Prophecy of Daniel.

It is a fundamental article of faith, among all Christians, that the Almighty Redeemer of the world, who came to suffer and to die for our rebellious race, and to inaugurate His Church as His kingdom upon earth, will come again to execute His final judgment, and banish all iniquity, and reign forever over His saints, in the full felicity of immortal life and joy. But this glorious consummation is not to be accomplished until Satan has been permitted to display all the resources of his subtle art and power; and mankind, misled by his delusions, have fully learned the awful character of his terrible dominion, in order that the whole intelligent universe may understand, through one experience, the inevitable results of sin, and thus be protected, throughout eternity, from the recurrence of the same tremendous rebellion against the gracious government of the blessed Creator — their only true and rightful Sovereign.

The sacred Scriptures clearly predict, therefore, *not*, as many suppose, a constantly increasing enlargement of the Church, until it extends over the whole earth, *before* His second advent; but, on the contrary, a growing degeneracy even amongst His professed subjects themselves, during which the work of Satan will go on successfully, and produce a general apostasy from all real faith, and then culminate in the appearance of that great *Antichrist*, who shall assume to himself the title of God, claiming the highest honors of divine worship, and inflicting the most severe

and dreadful misery and wretchedness, far exceeding all that had been ever known before. This, however, will be the last triumph of Satan, for the Lord will come — the glorious Deliverer — and cast down the diabolical usurper, and judge the world; and thus establish His everlasting kingdom of peace and righteousness, which sin and sorrow shall invade no more.

Such being the general outline of the truth which these pages are designed to prove from the only sure testimony of the Bible, I shall proceed to the examination of that testimony in its regular order.

There are many allusions to the reign of the great Antichrist among the old prophets of Israel; but the first clear and well-defined prediction on the subject occurs in the Book of Daniel, to whom the Lord himself gave so strong an attestation, saying, “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand :) then let them which be in Judæa flee into the mountains.”¹

The predictions recorded by this eminent prophet were delivered to him after a remarkable vision, and an angel was appointed to give an explanation of it, the first part of which, so far as our present subject is concerned, reads as follows: —

“Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and *another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings.* And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the

¹ St. Matthew xxiv. 15, 16.

dividing of time. But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."¹

That this is a prediction of the great Antichrist is admitted by all expositors without exception. But Protestant writers generally assume that it refers not to an individual king, but to the long succession of the Popes; and that the phraseology of "a time and times and the dividing of time" signifies 1260 years, during which the papal despotism should continue. For either of these assumptions, I am unable to perceive how the words of the prophet can yield any real authority.

No rule of construction is more imperative than this, namely, that where the same document repeats the same phrase in different places, we are bound to give it the same meaning in them all. Now the prophet Daniel employs the word *time* to signify one year, and no more, in three places, where the subject is the vision of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon. The divine decree of insanity, in punishment of the monarch's pride and impiety, was thus expressed by the angel in his dream: "Let his heart be changed from man's, and let a beast's heart be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him." And Daniel, interpreting the dream, repeats the phrase, and saith to the king: "They shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen, and they shall wet thee with the dew of heaven, and seven times shall pass over thee, till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will."² That *seven times* in these three places signify seven years, neither more

¹ Daniel vii. 23-27.

² Daniel iv. 16, 25.

nor less, is doubted by no one. And therefore, when the angel employs the very same language, in the *time, times, and the dividing of time*, it is granted on all sides that we are to understand one year, two years, and half a year.

Thus far there is no conflict among interpreters. But it is evident that three years and six months would never suit the notion that the Pope is the great Antichrist. And therefore the advocates of this hypothesis understand them to mean *prophetic years*, in which each day counts one year; and thus they extend the three years and a half to 1260 years, which began with the rise of the Papacy, and ended, as they generally suppose, about A. D. 1792, at which time the French Revolution gave a deadly blow to its authority.

For this, however, I cannot see that the sacred text furnishes any warrant. That a day is given for a year in many parts of the prophetic writings is true. And seven days (or a week) may properly bear the same signification. But I am not aware of any passage in which a *year* is put for 360 *years*. Certainly when Daniel speaks of the Lord's determination to "accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem,"¹ no one ever supposed that any other period than seventy *years* was intended. Certain also it is that the thousand years stated by St. John for the Millennium have always been understood literally, as the very name *Millennium*, universally adopted, shows most plainly. Equally certain it is that the seven "*times*," decreed for the insanity of Nebuchadnezzar, were seven *years*, since no one ever doubted it. Yet all these were cases of prophecy. The result, therefore, to my mind appears very manifest; namely, that we have no scriptural authority in the Book of Daniel for this favorite assumption. The "*time and times and the dividing of time*," signify three years and a half: no more. We shall see, by and by, that this was the universal interpretation of the Christian Fathers. The great and final climax of wickedness and misery was, in

¹ Chapter ix. 2.

their judgment, associated with the reign of Antichrist. But they held that the period would be short, in accordance with the language of the Saviour: "Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world, to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be *shortened*, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days *shall be shortened*." ¹

The same truth is intimated by St. John, in the Book of the Revelation: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a *short time*." ²

The prophecy of our Lord, I am aware, is usually understood to refer to the destruction of Jerusalem by the army of Titus. But it is allowed, by the best writers, that many prophecies have more than one accomplishment, embracing events that are remote, as well as events that are near, when they resemble each other in their general character. And it is hardly to be denied that the Saviour's prediction may be justly taken in connection with the time of the future Antichrist, because He unites it in the same discourse, with the period of His second advent: "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the *coming* of the Son of man be." ³

Seeing, then, that this is the only passage in the Bible that fixes the duration of the reign of Antichrist; that this duration, in full accordance with the words of our Lord and the Apostle, will be a *short* time, preceding the second advent of the blessed Redeemer; and that the phrase adopted by the Angel and Daniel cannot be justly supposed to signify more than three years and six months: it results incontrovertibly, according to my humble judgment, that the Pope is not the great Antichrist of Scripture. I am

¹ St. Matthew xxiv. 21, 22.

² Rev. xii. 12.

³ St. Matt. xxiv. 27.

as much opposed as any man to the usurpation, the corruptions, and the superstitious dogmas, of the Papacy; yet I cannot see how the Pope can be the subject of Daniel's prophecy, not only for this, but for many other reasons:—

1. Because it would be absurd to assign three years and a half to the dominion of Popery, which has already lasted for more than 1260 years, and still retains its hold over half the Christian world.

2. Because the prophet describes Antichrist as a *king*, which is the name appropriate to a *political* sovereign. Whereas the dominion of the Pope is religious and priestly. His own territory has never been called a kingdom, nor is he ever addressed by the title of a king.

3. Because the prophet speaks of an *individual*, whose reign should be terrible but brief. While the dominion of Popery has had a succession of hundreds, continued through centuries, and likely to continue, for aught we know, for a long time to come.

4. Because Daniel saith, that the "horn" (which is admitted to be the Antichrist) "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; *until the Ancient of days came.*"¹ But the wars of the Pope, whether they were against saints or sinners, have certainly ceased for more than two centuries; and if we even admit that the word "saints" refers to the Protestants, it cannot be truly said that "he prevailed against them." The result of the conflict was certainly, thank God! quite the contrary.

5. Because the prophet declares that Antichrist "*shall speak great words against the Most High.*"² But the Pope has always professed his faith in the old Catholic Creeds; and, however I must oppose the perilous additions brought in under his sanction upon the pure system of the Primitive Church, I have yet to learn at what time "great words against the Most High" were characteristic of the Papacy.

The remaining portion of this eminent prophet's testi-

¹ Chap. vii. 21, 22.

² *Ibid.* verse 25.

mony is recorded in his eleventh chapter, and there we read that "the King shall do according to his will ; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished. . . . Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god ; for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate shall he honor the God of forces : and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory. . . . But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him : therefore he shall go forth with great fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain ; yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people : and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time : and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book."¹

Here we have the conclusion of Daniel's prophecy about the great Antichrist, and I proceed to the reasons why, as it seems to me, it cannot be fairly applied to the Papacy.

1. Because the whole description sets before the mind the picture of a royal warrior, "going forth with great fury to destroy," and no allusion whatever is made to the religious and sacerdotal character which properly belongs to the papal jurisdiction.

2. Because the great Antichrist "shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods," which the Popes of Rome have never done, and could not do with any consis-

¹ Daniel xi. 36 to xii. 1, inclusive.

tency. For they derive their official powers from what they hold to be the meaning of our Lord's decree in favor of St. Peter, and their false tradition that this Apostle was the first Bishop of Rome. This doctrine I hold to be a great and grievous error, yet I have no right to suppose that they have any doubt of its truth. I repudiate, most strenuously, the whole figment of papal supremacy, and every other portion of the modern creed of Pope Pius IV., as likewise their last extravagance in decreeing the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. I maintain, with entire conviction, the Articles laid down in the standard book of our reformed Church, and I have not the slightest sympathy with any Romish corruption. But all this does not warrant me to declare that the Pope, in the language of the prophet, "*exalts himself, and magnifies himself above every god, and speaks marvelous things against the God of gods.*" On the contrary, he rests his claims upon the supposed ground of Scripture and tradition, and follows his delusion in the persuasion that he is obeying the will of the Almighty Redeemer.

Suppose the servant of an earthly king to be deceived by a false document which he accepts as genuine, and to commit many grievous errors, contrary to his sovereign's will, while he thinks that he is faithfully endeavoring to discharge his office in accordance with the instructions of his master: shall he be charged with *exalting himself above the king, and speaking marvelous words against him*, when, in fact, he constantly proclaims his allegiance to the monarch, and his duty of subjection, in the most open manner; and his worst faults may all be reduced to his reliance on a forgery, which had no real warrant from the throne?

For my own mind, this imaginary case affords a fair analogy to the position of the Pope. He is deceived by the false idea that the written Word of God, in connection with tradition, sustains his assumption of authority. He supposes, moreover, that *tradition*, of itself, should be taken

as the "unwritten Word of God," and that the decisions of the Church of Rome are as infallible as the Scriptures. Under the influence of these enormous errors, he may go awfully astray, as I am very sure he has done, and yet be entirely guiltless of any intention to set himself above the glorious Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, whom he constantly professes to adore. And in this view of the case, I do not see how the prophet's description of Antichrist could be justly applied to him.

There is no tenet of the papal system more revolting to the enlightened Christian mind than the rule which makes a duty of persecution. And yet our blessed Lord saith to his Apostles: "The time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will *think that he doeth God service.*"¹

And surely no mind can conceive a sin more awful than that of the Jews, who condemned to the Cross the Lord of life and glory. And yet, though nailed in agony on the accursed tree, He made a merciful allowance for the delusion which Satan had cast upon their minds, and prayed for them, saying, — "Father, forgive them; *they know not what they do.*"²

No one, I presume, will assert that the erroneous and corrupt doctrines of Romanism can be compared to the guilt of these wretched Jews; and yet it is clear that the dying prayer of our Lord was granted in favor of many amongst them on the day of Pentecost, when three thousand were converted. Now we cannot deny that the Church of Rome may possibly be reformed, since we know that millions of those who once belonged to her have been reformed already. And if we have the mind and spirit of Christ, as we must have or we cannot be true Christians, should we not be willing to pray on their behalf in hope and charity, — "Father, forgive them," since, through their blind confidence in their sadly erroneous system, they likewise are acting under a delusion, and "know not what they do"?

¹ St. John xvi. 2.

² St. Luke xxiii. 34.

3. Another difficulty in the common Protestant hypothesis is presented by the manifest fact that the prophecy connects the desolating work of Antichrist with the period when the Jews shall be restored. For we read expressly, that "he shall come to his end, and none shall help him," "*and at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people.*" But that time has certainly not arrived, and therefore the reign of Antichrist is still future.

4. Our Protestant writers usually consider the statement of Daniel, that Antichrist "shall not regard the desire of women," as being quite applicable to the Pope, because the priests of the Roman Church are bound by a vow of celibacy. But I do not perceive the force of this argument. For if we understand the great Antichrist to be a diabolical tyrant, devoted to war and blood, and spreading ruin around him during three years and a half before the second advent of the Saviour, it is surely a reasonable supposition that he should have no time nor inclination to indulge "the desire for women." An incarnate demon, exalting himself as a god, uttering blasphemy against the Most High, "going forth in great fury to destroy," could hardly be expected to take pleasure in a dalliance with females. The language of the prophet, therefore, only indicates another trait of his savage and ferocious character, and certainly does not express the habits of many among the Popes, if we are to credit the statements of their own historians. For those statements prove that men may renounce marriage, and yet indulge, to a fearful extent, in the "desire of women."

5. We come next to the declaration of Daniel, that "*in his estate shall he honor the God of forces* : and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold and silver, and with precious stones, and with pleasant things. Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory." This passage is interpreted by many Protestant writers as applicable to

the multitude of Saints, especially the Virgin Mary, whom the Pope worships, and whose shrines he adorns with gold and jewels.

But I do not see how the text can be fairly understood to warrant such a commentary. For the prophet speaks only of a *god*, in the singular number, whereas, if he referred to the Virgin and the Saints, he should have given the plural, suited to very many. Moreover, we must interpret these words so as not to interfere with his other statements, namely, "that the king shall exalt himself, and magnify himself *above every god*, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, . . . neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, . . . nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all." When, therefore, the prophet speaks of his honoring "the God of forces, a god whom his fathers knew not, a strange god whom he shall increase with glory," what other god should it be besides HIMSELF? Hence we read, "*In his estate* he shall honor the God of forces," meaning, as I suppose, that the god so honored was identified in his *own exalted place and person*, — the god of *forces*, having an invincible army at his command, — the master of the world, — seated in supreme majesty, — a strange god indeed whom his fathers knew not but exalted above all, — regarding no other god, and speaking marvelous things against the Most High, — adorned with gold and silver, and precious stones, and increased with all imaginable glory!

This appears to me the only consistent meaning, especially when we take into view the language of St. Paul, who describes the great Antichrist as "that man of sin, . . . the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that *he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*"¹ Understanding the words of Daniel, "in his estate," to refer what follows to Anti-

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4

christ himself, the whole passage is clear of difficulty: while the ordinary commentary presents a contradiction; the previous verse declaring that he should *not regard any other god*, while the next verse saith that he should *honor the God of forces*, etc.

Here, again, however, I can perceive nothing applicable to the Papacy. The Pope does not claim to be a god. Neither does he call the Blessed Virgin Mary a god or a goddess. Neither does he give to the Saints the honor due to Deity. I hold the worship rendered by him to the Virgin and the Saints in utter reprobation. I doubt not that his assumed power is a stupendous imposition, and I have shown at large, elsewhere,¹ the fallacy of its pretensions, and the numerous evils which for so many centuries attended its administration. But awfully corrupt as the papal system may be, and much as it called for the duty of reformation, I cannot see that the prophecy of Daniel is justly applied to the Pope, as the *great Antichrist*, notwithstanding that men, eminent for their talents and their zeal, have advocated that favorite Protestant opinion with so much ingenuity and learning.

4. There yet remains a branch of this famous prediction that ought to be noticed, before I close the chapter. For the prophet declares that Antichrist "shall plant the tabernacles of His palace between the seas *in the glorious holy mountain.*" This language admits of but one interpretation. The glorious holy mountain can only be Mount Moriah, on which the Temple of the living God had been erected at His own command. There, between the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean, Antichrist should plant the tabernacle of his palace. From this we may fairly infer what we shall find, in due time, to have been the interpretation of the Fathers; namely, that the great Antichrist should be a Jew, and that the seat of his empire should be

¹ See *The End of Controversy Controverted.*

in the east, at Jerusalem. But both of these facts concur in proving that the Pope is not the Antichrist. For the Popes have all been not Jews but Gentiles ; and their great "tabernacle" is not the Temple at Jerusalem, but St. Peter's at Rome.

2

Second Chapter.

The Prophecy of St. Paul.

THE next prediction in the Scriptures, which clearly foretells the coming and the character of Antichrist, occurs in St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, where we read as follows : —

“ Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means : for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition ; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things ? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work : only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming : even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish ; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”¹

That these solemn and awful words refer to the great Antichrist, has never been doubted; and I proceed to show why I cannot accept the Protestant interpretation, which applies them to the Pope of Rome.

1. The inspired Apostle declares, that the day of our Lord's advent will not arrive until there be a *falling away first*. The original word here translated a *falling away*, is ἀποστασία, or *apostasy*. Parkhurst defines the Greek word by its English derivative, which has precisely the same meaning, saving only that the profane writers of antiquity employed it to signify a *local* departure, as well as a departure from a previous profession. The verb occurs in Acts xxi. 21, where it is translated, “to *forsake*” Moses; and also in 1 Tim. iv. 1, where we read, that “in the latter times some shall *depart from the faith*:” in both of which, the meaning is precisely equivalent to that of our English word *apostatize*.

When we turn to Webster's dictionary, we find that *apostasy* is defined to be “an *abandonment* of what one has professed, a *total desertion or departure from one's faith or religion*.” And an *apostate*, in like manner, is defined to be “one who has *forsaken the church*, sect, profession, or party, to which he before adhered.”

Applying this unquestionable meaning to the language of St. Paul, I consider it perfectly manifest, that the period of the Papacy could not have been intended. For the appellate power of the Pope was conferred on him by the Emperor Valentinian in the fourth century, and his title of Universal Bishop was conceded by the Emperor Phocas in the seventh century; and at neither of these times, nor, indeed, before or since, has there been any

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 1-12.

apostasy from the faith expressed in the Catholic Creeds, as it was held from the beginning, and is still held generally throughout Christendom, in our own day.

That terrible event, therefore, the great *apostasy*, *falling away*, *abandonment*, or *departure from the faith*, which is predicted by the Apostle as the introduction to "the man of sin," the *Antichrist*, is still in the future. And it seems to me utterly preposterous to place it in the eighth century, when the Second Council of Nicæa was deluded to give its sanction to the worship of images. For this, however wrong, was not a *falling away* from the Church or the faith of Christ, but a superstitious and erroneous *addition* to what was held before, and what continued to be held without any consciousness of inconsistency. If a man contracts a new and strange disease which produces an enormous wen upon his neck, while, nevertheless, his frame continues to exercise its proper functions, would any one presume to say that he had *abandoned* his manhood? If an American citizen accepts a title of nobility from a foreign government, although the Constitution forbids it, would that make him an *apostate* from his country? Or if a householder, inhabiting a complete and admirable dwelling, should choose to dig in the midst a dangerous pit, and erect over it a showy superstructure, would this authorize us to conclude that he had *departed* from his home?

The faith in Christ is divine, and is the only foundation of the Church, as it is the only warrant of salvation. Every human addition to it is superstitious and unlawful, and therefore should be dreaded and conscientiously avoided by the true believer. But such addition does not necessarily imply any *apostasy from the faith itself*, which may still remain, as in the Church of Rome it does remain, in its own divine authority. The Pope has never renounced a single article of the Apostles' Creed. Neither has he ever denied the inspiration of the Scriptures. His error has been to add, by slow degrees, new articles of what he calls

faith, and thus to produce a dangerous compound, of which the old apostolic truth is still a part, maintained in its primitive integrity, while the rest is a corrupt result of human delusion. But so long as the Church retains the faith that is really divine, there can be no *apostasy*, because there is *no abandonment* and *no departure*. The difference is like that between disease and death. Superstition weakens and deforms the Church, but apostasy destroys it.

The great importance of this aspect of the case is obvious, when we reflect on the fundamental principle of the Reformation. For the object of that vast work was not to organize a new Church, but to cleanse and purify the old and Apostolic Church, which had been planted in the beginning by saints and martyrs, but had become sadly defiled by human error and corruption. The whole mass of superstitious innovation, therefore, was carefully cleared away, while all that was of divine authority was preserved inviolate. The Reformers took for their model the Primitive Church, which was the true Catholic Church several ages before the usurpation of the Papacy by which the great schism between the East and the West was consummated. The Church of Rome, so far as she had retained her original character, was regarded by our Reformers with due respect. Her Liturgical worship, in large measure, was continued. Her ordinations were esteemed valid; and no one denied that there were multitudes within her pale who might be the heirs of salvation, not by virtue of the false doctrines which she had unhappily adopted, but through the blessing promised to the divine faith which she had never cast away.

But all this was utterly inconsistent with the notion that the Church of Rome had become *apostate*, and was *the seat of Antichrist*. If the Reformers had really believed this, they could not have relied on their episcopal succession, nor have regarded the Pope as a true bishop, or his clergy as true priests. Neither could they, with any pro-

priety, have called their work a *reform*, for the Church of Christ cannot be a living body without the faith in Christ, who is its Head. And to undertake the reformation of a dead body would be a manifest absurdity.

2. I proceed, next, to the statement of St. Paul, that after the great apostasy, "that man of sin" shall "be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

I have already, in the previous chapter, set forth the reasons why this description is utterly inapplicable to the Pope. For Antichrist could not possibly show himself to be God, while he repeated the Creed, which the Pope has always professed. Moreover, in his public documents he calls himself "the servant of the servants of God," and his highest title is that of "the Vicar of Christ" and the "successor of St. Peter." True, indeed, it is, that he most erroneously claims, by virtue of these titles, a certain supremacy or paramount lordship over all other bishops, and even over the whole world; and in this he opposes himself against their rights and privileges. But this is a very different matter from opposing himself against God, and *exalting himself above all that is called God*, and showing himself that *he is God*. The "son of perdition," that diabolical Antichrist who shall do all this, is yet to come.

3. The temple of God, in which this demoniac enemy is to sit, is supposed, by many Protestant writers, to be the Church of Rome. But for this notion I can find no authority. The temple of God, according to the Scriptures, signifies the building erected by divine command on Mount Moriah, in Jerusalem. It was destroyed, indeed, by the King of Babylon, rebuilt under the decree of Cyrus, and again ruined by the army of Titus. Its site is now occupied by the Mosque of Omar. But it will be erected a third time, when the prophecies are fulfilled which foretell

the return of the dispersed people of Israel. It is true, however, that the word "temple" is applied to the Church in a *spiritual sense*, and also to individual believers. Ye "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," saith St. Paul, "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an *holy temple in the Lord*." ¹ And again he uses similar language to the Corinthians: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." ² The word "temple" is also applied with reference to the Sacred Body of Christ, where He saith: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." For St. John saith that he spake of the temple of his body.³ And lastly, we read, in the Revelation, of the temple opened in heaven.⁴

But it is evident that none of these could possibly be the temple of God in which Antichrist is to have his seat, and arrogate to himself the worship due only to the Almighty. It is absurd to suppose that he could establish his throne in the *holy temple* formed by the souls of the faithful; and it would be blasphemy to say that he could occupy the Body of Christ, or hold his state as God in the temple of heaven. But these are the whole of the texts in which the word occurs in any other sense than that which belongs to the temple on Mount Moriah. *There* Antichrist shall have his seat, as many wicked ones have had before him. *There* a wretched crowd, who have rejected Christ, will bow down in abject idolatry at his feet, as a present deity. Not in Rome, but in Jerusalem, will be consummated this climax of audacious rebellion against the Most High. And hence, we have here another demonstration that this prediction cannot justly be understood as applicable to the Papacy.

¹ Eph. ii. 20, 21.

² 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17.

³ St. John ii. 19-21.

⁴ Rev. xi. 19.

4. The next portion of St. Paul's revelation sets forth the intervening period before the appearing of Antichrist : *"Ye know,"* saith he to the Thessalonians, *"what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work : only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way."*

Our Protestant interpreters usually suppose, that this refers to the imperial power of Rome, which stood in the way of the Papacy until the destruction of the western part of the empire by the inroads of the Barbarians. For it was after this event that the Pope acquired his title of Universal Bishop, and his secular dominion over that part of Italy which formed the Papal States. And no small amount of ingenuity and learning has been displayed in the enumeration of the ten kings or kingdoms, into which (as the ten toes of the image seen in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, related by the prophet Daniel) the Western Empire was divided.

This is certainly an ingenious hypothesis ; yet I am unable to perceive its proper bearing on the power of the Papacy. If that power claimed to be a temporal dominion, the imperial government of Rome might, indeed, stand in its way ; but that was not the fact. The empire had ceased to be heathen, and had become Christian, three centuries before the rise of Popery. The authority of the Bishop of Rome was fully acknowledged by all the emperors of the East, and the title of Universal Bishop, against which Gregory the Great opposed himself so strongly as the "forerunner of Antichrist," was actually assumed by the Patriarch of Constantinople, under the very wing of the imperial power. This, of itself, proves that the downfall of the Western Empire could not have been necessary to the rise of the papal supremacy. On the contrary, the real origin of the Pope's superiority lay in his connection with the great city of Rome, which was the old metropolis of the Empire, and the head of secular government, for many ages. The dignity of the imperial throne was re-

flected on the chief ruler of the Church, and if Rome had not been the seat of imperial power, it never would have been the seat of Popery.

This is further evident from the fact that the Pope extended his sway throughout Europe without any serious obstacle from the power of kings, emperors, or princes. Instead of being his enemies, they were his friends and supporters for eight centuries together. And this is easily understood, when we remember that there is no necessary conflict between the powers of Church and State, when the rights of each are correctly defined and fairly exercised.

There is only one aspect of the case which can be assigned as a ground for the notion that the downfall of the Western Empire was required for the rise of the papal power. And this only concerns the possession of Rome, and the petty States which belonged to the Pope's temporal dominion. It is true, doubtless, that the conquest of Italy by the barbarian tribes, opened the way for the grant of the papal territory, by the expulsion of the Lombards, through the military force of Pepin, king of France. The Pope had given his sanction to the usurpation of the throne by Pepin, who had previously been the mayor of the palace; and the usurper repaid the debt by the gift of this temporal sovereignty. But this has no necessary connection with the assumed rights of the Papacy. And quite as little do those rights rest on the supposed donation of the Emperor Constantine. For no one can be ignorant that the Pope founds his imaginary power to be the ecclesiastical ruler of the world, on what he maintains to be the express word of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Apostle Peter; that this Apostle is said to have been the first Bishop of Rome; and therefore, that every Pope, being the successor of St. Peter, possesses the right to govern not only the Church of Rome, but the whole earth, as the sole vicar of the Divine Redeemer. This claim, however, was of a religious and ecclesiastical character, and involved no secular

dominion. The Romanists do not pretend that any temporal authority was attached to it before the supposed donation of the Emperor Constantine. All the proper prerogatives of the Pope exist, therefore, according to their theory, by divine right, independently of his temporal lordship over the Papal States; and they hold that the loss of these, however it might be lamented on the score of expediency, would have no effect whatever on the magnitude and importance of his official and divine power.

The whole basis of this common Protestant hypothesis, namely, that the fall of the Western Roman empire was necessary to the claims of the Pope, is thus seen to be a pure misapprehension. From the time of the conversion of Constantine, Christianity became the established religion of the West as well as of the East, and the growing aggrandizement of the Bishop of Rome was so far from being "let" or hindered by the imperial power, that it was encouraged and aided by emperors, kings, and princes, as a general rule, with few exceptions, until the sixteenth century; and it is still an object of the most earnest solicitude among all the monarchs who profess to belong to his communion, how to maintain the Pope in his ancient dignity: so that he is one of the most important centres of political interest even at this day.

Dismissing, therefore, as clearly untenable, this common Protestant interpretation, let us try whether a very different sense may not be found, which agrees with scriptural truth, and is in perfect harmony with the other clauses in the Apostle's prediction.

And here, we must first rectify the translation, which does not fairly express the language of St. Paul. The original Greek is as follows:—Τὸ γὰρ μυστήριον ἤδη ἐνεργεῖται τῆς ἀνομίας, μόνον ὁ κατέχων ἄρτι ἕως ἐκ μέσου γένηται. The literal version of these words would be this, namely, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he is now hindering until he becomes from the midst." It is

quite manifest that something must be supplied here, in order to give the latter part of the text any meaning. And therefore, our English version fills up the void thus: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he that now letteth (*i. e.* hindereth) will let until he be taken out of the way."

It may be interesting to my scholastic readers to see some specimens of this obscure text in other versions.

Thus the Latin Vulgate reads as follows: "Nam mysterium jam operatur iniquitatis: tantum ut qui tenet nunc teneat, donec de medio fiat." The version of the learned Arias Montanus is still closer to the original: "Nam mysterium jam operatur iniquitatis, solum tenens nunc donec e medio fiat."

The German comes near to the English version: "Denn es reget sich schon bereits die Bosheit heimlich, ohne dasz, der es jetzt aufhält, musz hinweg gethan werden."

The Italian reads thus:—"Perciòchè già fino ad ora opera il misterio dell' iniquità: aspettando solo che colui che lo ritiene al presente sia tolto di mezzo."

The Spanish: "Porque ya está obrando el misterio de la iniquidad: solo que el que esta firme ahora, manténgase, hasta que sea quitado de en medio."

And the French goes farther than any from the sense of the original: "Car le mystère d'iniquité se forme déjà; il faut seulement que celui qui lui fait obstacle présentement, soit détruit."

The fairest of these versions is that of Arias Montanus, and the Latin Vulgate stands next. All the rest give a meaning to the Greek word *γένηται* which it cannot bear. It never signifies *taking away*. And the French version, in rendering it by the word *détruit*, "destroyed," is the worst among them all. But since it is evident that the last clause of the text requires something to fill up the ellipsis, I would suggest the following, as in better accord-

ance with the subject of the prophecy, so that we might read it thus: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work, only he is now hindering until he becomes *estranged* from the midst." And I presume that the "He" of whom the Apostle speaks is the Holy Spirit, whose powerful influence, in the beginning of the Gospel dispensation, effectually "hindered," or restrained "the mystery of iniquity," or the working of Satan, until the Church was successfully established; but towards the end, when even within the bounds of Christendom there will be multitudes who "receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved," — when there will be a wide "falling away," or "apostasy," — when, according to the declaration of our Lord Himself, the condition of mankind will be like that in the days of Noah, and faith shall hardly be found upon earth, — then the Holy Spirit, grieved and resisted, will become *estranged* from the midst of these apostate nations who once believed, and, withdrawing His gracious influence from the rebellious hosts, and no longer "hindering" the work of Satan, will permit the terrible culmination of demoniac power in the person of the great Antichrist, for the predicted period, preparatory to the glorious advent of the Lord, to close the present dispensation, and destroy the power of our fearful adversary by "the brightness of His coming."

This interpretation appears to me perfectly consistent with all the other statements in the Word of God, and liable to no fair objection. And it accords not only with the language of the blessed Redeemer, but also with the description given by St. Paul elsewhere, in his Epistle to Timothy: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron."¹ And again, saith the same Apostle: "This

¹ 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2.

know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.”¹

These awful words prove the “apostasy” in the Church, since it will appear in those who will still retain a “form of godliness,” though they “deny the power thereof.” And alas! there is much in the “signs of the time” to warn the truly faithful that we are in the beginning, at least, of the period, and drawing near to the consummation of wickedness when Antichrist shall be revealed.

5. The next portion of St. Paul’s prediction on the subject before us, sets forth the characteristic manner of Antichrist’s appearance. His *coming* is to be “*after the working of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying wonders.*” And here our Protestant writers appeal with great confidence to the immense mass of miracles related in the lives of the Romish saints, and alleged to be still wrought by their relics. And truly it forms a sad evidence of fraud, deceit, and superstition, working with melancholy success on human credulity. But the argument of those respected writers does not meet the case. The Apostle saith, that the “*coming*” of Antichrist “*is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders.*” This, assuredly, cannot be said of the Pope. We do not read that the rise or *coming* of the Papacy was attended by “all power and signs and lying wonders;” nor was there anything connected with it that looked wonderful at all. It was a matter of mere human policy that gave the Pope his first step towards appellate power through the edict of the Emperor Valentinian in the fourth century. The title

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 1-5.

of Universal Bishop was not conferred until the seventh century. And neither of these events was marked with any "signs and lying wonders," nor with the slightest manifestation of supernatural agency.

I am quite as unable to perceive the historical connection of false miracles with the Popes subsequently; for I do not see that any of them pretended to claim miraculous power. So far from it, indeed, that we have an express *disclaimer* of miracles in the Church, after its full establishment had rendered them no longer necessary. Thus, for example, Isidore, the eminent Bishop of Seville, in the sixth century, saith: "The reason why the Church *does not perform the miracles* which she performed under the Apostles, is, that then it was fitting that the world should believe through miracles; but now it is fitting that the world, already believing, should shine in good works. . . . Whoever, therefore, now requires miracles, seeks only *vain glory*, that he may be praised."¹ And Gregory the Great, himself the Bishop of Rome, speaks with equal decision: "The Holy Church despises heretics, even if they do miracles, *because she does not acknowledge them to be a proof of sanctity.*"²

While it is true, therefore, that the modern writers of the Church of Rome maintain the continuance of miracles, and even absurdly insist upon them as one of the proofs of sanctity, in opposition to one of their best Popes, it is certainly untrue that the power of working miracles has ever been claimed by any of the Popes themselves. It was not by them, but by the monks, that the legends of their wonder-working saints were concocted; and although the Popes allowed those statements, and accepted them as the basis of their most audacious assumption in their acts of canonization, yet this by no means warrants the notion that the Pope is Antichrist. For the prophecy declares that "*his*

¹ Isidor. Hispal., *Sententiarum*, lib. 3, p. 424.

² S. Greg. Mag., *Moral.*, lib. 20, c. xxx.

coming is after the working of Satan." The "signs and lying wonders" stand connected with *his* person, in the statement of St. Paul. And the difference is manifest on the slightest reflection. A judge in an earthly court may admit false testimony that a murder was committed, and on the strength of that testimony, may pronounce a very erroneous sentence upon the supposed criminal. But no one would say that this could make him responsible for the perjury, or accessory to the crime. And in like manner the Pope may admit an abundance of false testimony that miracles were performed by others, and pronounce a most erroneous sentence of canonization, while no man of clear judgment would contend that he had therefore any agency in the lies of the witnesses, or in the performance of the alleged acts. Strange indeed, it now seems to me, that a distinction so plain could have been overlooked by learned theologians. Strange, how any writer of intelligence could fail to see that a *belief* in miracles is one thing, and the actual *doing* of them is quite another. And yet I adopted the fallacy myself, under the influence of approved authors; nor was I satisfied of my mistake until I examined carefully, clause by clause, the language of the Bible, and compared it with the whole course of the papal history.

6. The concluding words of the Apostle place before us, clearly, the reason why the Lord predicted, and would in due time permit, the awful reign of this Satanic Antichrist. It was "because they" (*i. e.* the world at large) "*received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*" And for this cause God *shall send them strong delusion* that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned *who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*"

To understand this aright, it may be well to take a wider survey than ordinary of what we may reverently regard as the great principles of the divine administration. And to this I shall devote the following chapter.

Third Chapter.

Principles of the Divine Administration.

THAT God is the perfect essence of life, and of all conceivable power, knowledge, justice, benevolence, and truth, is doubted by no one who believes in a creation. But amongst His sublime attributes, LOVE holds the highest place, and all the rest are governed by its controlling influence.

For love is essentially an active principle, and cannot rest without an object. From this, therefore, we may derive the vast work of creation — worlds on worlds, peopled with every variety of life or being ; suns, stars, planets, light, heat, electricity, magnetism, water, air, with all the lower forms of matter ; rising upwards to the animated tribes — insects, reptiles, fish, birds, and animals ; and then going onward to the spiritual element in human nature, till we come to the angelic hierarchy, and the Cherubim and Seraphim who surround the throne of GOD, the wondrous and adorable Creator of the whole !

But the Scriptures declare that the Almighty made all things for His glory. And this is most true. I do not perceive, however, that it militates in the slightest degree with the proposition that His boundless love was the great impelling motive. For I conceive that the glory of God consists preëminently in the manifestation of His love, by the diffusion of happiness amongst the countless myriads who were the products of His wisdom and His power, on whom He might lavish the beneficence of His providential care, and to whom, in the spiritual nature of men and

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angels, He should give the image of His own divine attributes, making them capable of knowing and loving Him, and thus sharing in His infinite felicity.

The stupendous work of creation we may reverently believe to have gone on throughout eternity ; for the universe contains innumerable worlds, the sum of which no human science can estimate. The discoveries of astronomy only exhibit more and more multitudes of stars, with each improvement of the telescope. It is therefore to be assumed as most reasonable, that the Almighty has been adding to them from the beginning ; and our earth is, perhaps, the youngest of the whole. Some of these worlds must have been first, and some last, in the order of creation ; and I am unable to see any ground for the fanciful conjectures of modern philosophers on the vast age of our globe, put forth, as they have too often been, in opposition to the only reliable evidence furnished by the Word of God.

But as the glorious Creator is essential love, and made in His own image the angels and all other beings possessing a spiritual nature, it was a necessary result that love must be the great law of their existence, since in no other way could they render a fit return for the wondrous love of God, who had given them life, and all their faculties and powers, fitted for felicity. Love to God, therefore, became their first and highest duty ; and the next duty, derived from that, was to love each other as themselves. And the violation of these laws was sin, and the indulgence of the sin, sooner or later, must lead to rebellion.

Here lay the inherent difficulty, as I suppose, which rendered it impossible for Omnipotence itself to prevent the inroad of transgression. For love must be FREE, or it is not entitled to the name. It is a contradiction in terms to talk of loving by compulsion. And therefore, while we cannot doubt that the blessed Creator foresaw that some of His creatures would depart from the law of love and incur the guilt and terrible consequences of rebellion, yet

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no act of mere power could avoid the evil without a total destruction of their spiritual nature.

Hence, as we may reasonably conceive, arose the necessity of permitting Satan and his associates to violate the law of Heaven, when, by withdrawing their love from God and concentrating it upon self, they severed the bond of faithful allegiance to their Maker. The Lord might have cut them off in their iniquity ; but this would not have been an effectual lesson to the angelic host, nor would it have guarded them from the same transgression. And therefore the wisdom of the Most High allowed the defection to go on, until the fruits of self-love should be manifested in the natural result of envy, pride, and discontent, ending in open rebellion. And then the apostate angels were cast down out of heaven, and Satan was suffered to deceive our first parents by falsehood ; in order to prove, to the whole Universe, the misery inseparable from sin, and to show by the wondrous mercy of Redemption that God is love, and governs, in perfect love, His whole boundless dominion.

That this is in entire harmony with enlightened reason, may be seen on a little reflection. For we all know that love is the controlling element of our nature, and that the pursuit and enjoyment of what we love, are the strongest stimulants to effort, and determine the prevailing character of our life. We all know, likewise, that this element of love is free, and cannot be made subject to compulsion — nay, that the attempt to compel it is worse than vain, since it commonly increases the spirit of resistance. Love may be won by love ; but to drive or force it is simply impossible.

It is further certain, that the quality of our love determines the quality of our happiness. If our warmest love is given to what is brutish, we can only enjoy the happiness of the brute. If we love what is pure and elevated, our happiness rises to the same level. Hence the character of our happiness depends on the character of our love ; and

therefore it is that the love of God can alone enable us to enjoy the happiness of heaven.

And there is yet another fact in which all minds concur, namely, that self-love, when it obtains the mastery, is the lowest form of its manifestation, and the most generally regarded with dislike and aversion. For while it is true that the Creator has implanted an allowable degree of self-love to be a constant stimulus and preservative of human life, and has made it the standard of affection towards our neighbor, yet it is no less true that an undue indulgence of it is condemned by all mankind. Thus excessive self-love is well known to be the parent of vanity, pride, envy, hatred, and malice. It is sordid, craving, covetous, and base. It is callous and unfeeling to the wants of others, regardless of every right which does not minister to its own gratification, and ready to commit any crime when it is relieved from the fear of detection. In a word, self-love, when it reaches the point which men call *selfishness*, is universally detested and despised. It is the irreconcilable foe to every generous and noble object. It is insensible to the common claims of human sympathy. And hence, while the unselfish man, who lives to promote the happiness of all around him, is followed by the love and admiration of the community, the selfish wretch is sure to be regarded with contempt, and no rank or riches can secure for him the slightest tribute of cordial esteem or affection.

These familiar truths may aid in proving the perfect reasonableness of the Divine law which made the highest duty and the real felicity of angels and of men consist in the love of God and the love of our neighbor. Satan and his associates violated this essential law. Their rebellion was marked by the blackest ingratitude towards their Creator, to whose goodness they were indebted for their being, and for the glorious rank which they enjoyed as a part of the Celestial Hierarchy. They spurned all their

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highest obligations, and in their false and absurd desire of independence, concentrated their love upon themselves, became traitors against the government of the Almighty, and were cast down from their high estate, without hope of mercy. For they sinned in heaven, without tempter or temptation. In their case, there was no possible plea to palliate or extenuate the crime. And the wisdom of God resolved to make them His instruments to teach the whole universe, what had hitherto been unknown, namely, the wondrous extent of His love, and the awful consequences of rebellion.

To this sublime end, Satan, with his host of inferior spirits — once angels, but now demons — was cast down to our earth, where he was permitted to deceive our first parents, Adam and Eve, and involve them in his foul rebellion. But there was this great difference between the transgressors — that they were *tempted and deluded by his subtlety and art*, while he rebelled without temptation, and was, therefore, the original author of iniquity. This, though it could by no means excuse, may be justly regarded as a palliation of, their sin; and the infinite love of the glorious Creator could therefore be displayed in their behalf by the gracious plan which should provide for the redemption of themselves and their posterity, through the Atonement and Mediation of the Saviour.

I see no reason to doubt that the rebellion of the angels, and the subsequent fall of man, were made known forthwith throughout the whole universe; for every part of the Almighty Sovereign's dominions was equally interested in the facts, and equally solicitous to know how the love and the justice of God would deal with this stupendous invasion of His government. We know that His angels are sent to communicate His will to man. And it is most reasonable to suppose that they are also His messengers to all the other worlds, over each one of which we may well conceive that He has set an Archangel to preside, and with all of which He maintains a constant intercourse.

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For all the host of heaven, and all the inhabitants of these innumerable worlds, were under the same obligation of supreme love to God, and fraternal love to their fellow-subjects. They were all likewise liable to the same sin, by withdrawing this love and concentrating their affections on themselves. For love, being of necessity *free*, could not be compelled by the mere exercise of power. And therefore other angels might rebel, as Satan had done; and other races might fall, as man had fallen; and hence the whole universe was concerned in the warning of their fate, and in the mode by which the government of Heaven would guard its rights, and punish transgression.

In this way, it is easy to perceive that the sublime and gracious purposes of God, in sending His only-begotten Son to be the Saviour of the world, were not confined to the race of fallen man, but extended their blessed influence throughout the universe. And hence the plan adopted by the Almighty provided for the following objects, namely:—

First and mainly, it displayed the marvelous love of the great Creator, in a form and to an extent that no mind save that of the Most High could have conceived possible. That the Divine Son of God—One in essence with the Eternal Father—should stoop to be united to man's nature, to suffer, and to give Himself as an atoning Sacrifice in the agony of the Cross for a guilty world: this was a proof of love which must have amazed the angelic host and the whole universe. The love of God was indeed manifested in all His works, and the exalted privileges which He had bestowed on His intelligent creatures were more than enough to make their adoring love to Him their highest and most sacred duty. But the sacrifice of Christ exceeded them all. For the work of Creation demanded no abasement and no suffering. Six commands, on six successive days, made our earth, and adorned it with life and beauty. The Lord had but to speak, and it was done. While Redemption, on the contrary, required the humilia-

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tion of the Son of God, for thirty-three years of human toil and sorrow, closed by hatred, and persecution, and a torturing death. No mortal thought can do justice to that astounding sacrifice of celestial love. And the spirit that refuses to be won by it, must indeed be utterly irreclaimable.

In the second place, this divine plan seems designed to enlighten the universe with respect to the character of rebellion and the inevitable results of sin, in relation to which the lessons of experience had become necessary, since the defection of Satan and his host in heaven, and the fall of man on earth. To make these consequences manifest, the Almighty permitted the Adversary to set up his kingdom and become the god of this world, in order, as we may reverently suppose, that the whole intelligent creation might be taught the difference between the government of God and the government of demons. And it is not difficult to imagine the horror and disgust with which the angelic hierarchy and the universe at large must have been affected, when they learned the terrible history of selfish ambition, of hatred and strife, of proud oppression, of lust and robbery, of cruelty and blood, of misery and wretchedness in a thousand forms, which the kingdom of Satan has exhibited for so many ages, and shall yet exhibit in a still more fearful shape, before the period allotted to his awful empire is closed by the second advent of the glorious Redeemer. .

Yet the goodness of God at no time left mankind without the warning of His truth, the invitations of His love, and the care of His protection. At no time since the Fall has He failed to send His commissioned messengers, to admonish our deluded race of their guilt and danger, and to assure them of forgiveness if they would repent and return. His own direct Word proclaimed His divine law to Israel, and by the most stupendous miracles, the most severe inflictions, and the most gracious acts of kindness,

He made the chosen nation a teacher to the world. And after the consummation of the marvelous Sacrifice which exhibited the love of God in the person of the Divine Redeemer, with a power of demonstration so transcendent and sublime, *the Church* has been made His witness. The kingdom of Christ proclaims the glory of the Most High in opposition to the kingdom of Satan. The power of the Holy Spirit is pledged, through Christ, to all who desire to escape from the thralldom of the Evil One. The strength of celestial grace is promised to overcome the proclivity of our fallen and depraved nature. And thus it is that our earth is made the grand theatre, in the eyes of the universe, for the full display of the working of rebellion on the one hand, and the infinite love and pity of our true Sovereign and Almighty Lord upon the other, in accordance with the Apostle's declaration, "that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known *by the Church* the manifold wisdom of God."¹

The compassion of our glorious Creator and Redeemer, however, has not permitted Satan to exercise his tyranny over mankind any farther than their own will was disposed to obey him. The alternative has always been exhibited before them. And hence, their final doom will be the result of their obstinate rejection of the pardon purchased for them, by the wondrous sacrifice of the Divine Saviour. For "this," saith St. John, "is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."² The Adversary has succeeded in deluding his votaries by the attractions of worldly wealth, and power, and sensual pleasure. Yet still he is under the government of God, which has curbed his malice within certain bounds, for the sake of the faithful few who repented of their rebellion and gladly embraced the offered pardon of the gracious Redeemer. But at the end of the allotted period, when the increasing

¹ Eph. iii. 10.

² St. John iii. 19.

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wickedness of mankind shall have reached its climax, the foul usurper will be allowed to triumph in the person of the great Antichrist reigning as the open and declared God of the world, with all the cruelty and atrocious hatred of his demoniac nature, in order to furnish the last terrible proof of his true character, and the quality of that tremendous despotism of misery and woe, which must be borne by all that reject the love and mercy of the Saviour.

Three years and a half were allotted to the earthly ministry of Christ, marked by daily miracles of pity and compassion, and constant instruction in celestial truth, closed by His wondrous sacrifice of propitiation for the sins of the world, His resurrection, and ascension into Heaven.

Three years and a half will also be allotted to the reign of Antichrist, marked by subtle falsehood, by the constant work of violence, atrocious cruelty, carnage, and blood, with all the attendant forms of human suffering and wretchedness; but closed at the second advent of the Lord, in majesty and glory, by the utter overthrow of the audacious usurper, and his imprisonment in hell.

It was a very ancient doctrine, held by the pious Jews, and currently accepted by the Christian Church during the early centuries, that the Lord had allotted six thousand years from the creation of our globe, during which the rebel angels should be allowed to extend their empire over mankind, while the Son of God should endeavor to reclaim them by the manifestation of His marvelous love. That the conflict between the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of the Messiah should be followed towards the end by the triumph of the Evil Spirit during three years and a half, according to the prophecy of Daniel; and then he should be finally condemned to the bottomless abyss, and another thousand years should succeed as the great Sabbath of our world, in peace and righteousness and joy, under the reign of the glorious Redeemer.

In this hypothesis, the analogy of a week was adopted,

each day being reckoned for a thousand years, according to the declaration of St. Peter, that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."¹ And as, in a week, six days were allotted to work, before the holy Sabbath, so six thousand years should be permitted to the working of evil against good: and then should come the Sabbatic thousand, or the Millennium, so clearly set forth in the Revelation of St. John, to be followed by the general Judgment, the utter condemnation of all rebellion, and the eternal establishment of the government of God, on the true foundation of love. For the marvelous sacrifice of Christ will then have demonstrated to the whole universe that God is Love, in its purest and most sublime form; and the safety and happiness of His creatures will be seen to depend on the exercise of supreme love to Him, and equal love to each other: while self-love will be understood as the original sin of Satan, and all the orders of spiritual intelligence will detest it, as the certain road to wretchedness and ruin.

This view of our world would give it the most important rank as the appointed region for the final settlement of the greatest of all controversies, in which every other part of the vast universe was directly concerned. For this controversy involved the right which Satan claimed, to withdraw his allegiance from his Creator, and concentrate his love upon himself; together with the consequences which must ensue, even when he was allowed a full opportunity and the most ample field for working out his atrocious scheme of rebellion. God, who is essential Love, had made angels and men in His own image and likeness; and their true happiness consisted in their highest love to Him, and their fraternal love to each other. Satan originated the notion that greater happiness could be attained by casting off this divine principle of the celestial government, and making self the idol of each individual's devotion. The

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 8.

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whole universe was interested in the result, because, love being of necessity free, it was always possible that the sin of Satan might arise in any quarter; and hence we may perceive the wisdom of the Almighty in allowing the original rebels to try their wicked experiment, in a long continued conflict with His love, in order to furnish to the whole of His boundless dominion the plain and practical evidence that His law of love was the only safeguard of their happiness, while the self-love of Satan must lead to misery and wretchedness. And thus we may perceive why the awful rebellion was suffered to proceed, and why so long a period was required to perfect the demonstration. For the universe at large needed the same lesson of instruction. The history of Satan's work in our world has been, as I presume, constantly communicated by the angelic messengers of God to every other planet in the boundless firmament. Our earth has thus become the object of intense interest, in the eyes of all the Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, and Powers, under the government of the glorious Creator. And when the judgment which has been so long suspended shall at length descend, after the wonders of Divine Love have been exhibited in such a transcendent form by the Incarnation of the Son of God and His stupendous sacrifice for man's redemption, the celestial decree will be hailed as most necessary and most just, by the acclamations of the universe. The lesson of experience thus exhibited will guard the whole from any repetition of such awful evil, throughout eternity; while our globe, accursed for so many ages by the tyranny of Satan over the souls of deluded men, will be restored to its first pure beauty, in the new heaven and the new earth wherein shall dwell righteousness; and the Throne of Christ, the Divine Deliverer, shall be established with the assenting homage of all Creation, in everlasting love and joy.

But this blessed result could not have been secured if God had annihilated Satan and his rebel host immediately

on the commission of their sin. That the great Creator might have done so with perfect justice, is evident enough. Yet the Allwise Ruler of the Universe, in love for the whole of His vast dominion, saw that this could never preserve them from a recurrence of the same sin, after Satan had set the example. The immediate sentence of the transgressor might have struck terror to their hearts for a time. But the government of God was designed to rest on love to Him, as a tender Father, and not on slavish fear, as if He were a tyrant. Love, in itself, was necessarily *free*, and must be won by a *new* manifestation of the love of God in Christ, accompanied by the *experience* which Satan himself should be allowed to furnish, when all should be convinced that his renunciation of allegiance through the love of self, could only lead to wretchedness and ruin. And thus we may vindicate the wisdom and the goodness of the Most High, in making our world serve as the great instructor of the universe: teaching them to fear and detest the satanic love of self; securing, forever, their adoring gratitude for the sublime manifestation of the love of God, in the sacrifice of His only-begotten Son; and binding every intelligent creature to his Creator, by the willing homage of the heart, in the gracious chain of love and happiness, which should never more be broken.

This general view of the divine dispensation is not in anywise essential, either to the fixed points of a saving faith, or to the exposition of St. Paul's prediction. But I present it to the reader because it appears to me useful in showing that the whole of what is revealed is in perfect harmony with reason. And I think it may aid the Christian to form a loftier estimate of the Saviour's work of love, when it is regarded not only as it respects our world, but as it stands connected with the security of the universe.

I have already, at considerable length, explained what seems to me the most reasonable hypothesis in accounting for the fact, that the Almighty cast Satan and his associates

down to earth, and permitted the temptation of our first parents, the sad result of which brought sin and death into our world. And in the last days, when the great Adversary, in the person of Antichrist, shall assume the power of the Deity, "sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself that he is God," the vast majority of mankind will doubtless consist of those who have "*received not the love of the truth that they might be saved.*" The wondrous manifestation of the love of God, in the sacrifice of the Blessed Redeemer, will be scorned in the reckless pride of infidelity. Their consciences will be dead to every sense of religious duty. Their lives will be systematically given to sin, so that they will only "*have pleasure in unrighteousness.*" And then, when the climax of impiety is reached, and Antichrist appears to claim their worship as the Supreme Divinity, they will be ready to acknowledge him: first, because they will have no religious faith to stand in the way of his pretensions; secondly, because his coming will be "after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders," and as they had long before rejected the Bible, they will have no warning from the Word of God to protect them from his arts; thirdly, because they had abandoned the Lord, and, therefore, He will abandon them to their real master, Satan. By this He is said to "*send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.*" For all men since the Fall, being subject to Satan through sin, and having only one way of deliverance, through the atoning sacrifice and loving-kindness of the Saviour, must accept the offered pardon, or be given up to their delusion by the divine decree. If they will not receive mercy by repentance and faith, they must receive justice of necessity. And God sends them strong delusion only because they despise His truth, and choose to serve under the false authority of Antichrist, taking their only "*pleasure in unrighteousness.*"

This part of the prophecy, however, has no particular

bearing upon the question, whether the Pope is the great Antichrist. The language of the Apostle throughout would indeed seem applicable only to an individual, — “the man of sin,” “the son of perdition,” — and appears to be entirely inconsistent with a succession of individuals amounting to hundreds, some of whom were blameless in their lives, though many were evil. But the other reasons which I have stated are quite enough, and leave no room in my own mind for any doubt upon the subject.

Fourth Chapter.

The First and the Second Beast.

PROCEEDING to the next strongly marked prediction of Antichrist, we read, in the thirteenth chapter of the Revelation, that St. John saw a vision of a beast ascending from the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy; that "all the world wondered after the beast. And they *worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast*: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue *forty and two months*. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make *war with the saints, and to overcome them*: and power was given him over *all kindreds, and tongues, and nations*. And *all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him*, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

The ordinary explanation of these verses is, that they represent, symbolically, the Roman Empire. But there are difficulties in the way of this exposition which I am not able to overcome. For —

1. The visions of St. John should be understood as respects the future. The Revelation is expressly stated to be "of things which must shortly come to pass."¹ But the Ro-

¹ Chap. i. 1.

man Empire had existed long before, and the Apostle could hardly see it "rise up out of the sea," when it had already risen and had attained its most extensive dominion. That it may be properly considered as still subsisting, though divided into several kingdoms, may be admitted. But if so, the time for its rising again to its ancient unity and power must be yet in the future.

2. It is said that power was given to the beast to continue *forty and two months*, which make three years and a half, the time which we have already seen allotted to the reign of Antichrist. I do not understand how this period can be made to synchronize with the power of the old Roman Empire; for even if it be supposed that each day should be counted for a year, it will still be found impossible to adjust the time to the facts of history. This yields another proof that the event is still future.

3. The prophet saith that it was given to the beast "to *make war upon the saints, and to overcome them.*" Now it is true that under the laws of the old Roman Empire, and the edicts of certain emperors, the early Christians were grievously persecuted. This, however, was not by *war*, since the work was entirely performed by *civil process*, the Christians being brought as individuals before the tribunal of the magistrate, and condemned by a judicial sentence. And the remainder of the passage seems still less applicable, for the Roman Empire was so far from overcoming the saints, that the saints overcame the idolatry of the Empire. The conversion of Constantine, the Roman Emperor, in A. D. 312, established the Church; and, therefore, we have here another proof that the fulfillment of this also must be still in the future.

4. St. John states, that power was given unto the beast over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations; which certainly cannot be applied to the old Roman Empire, since that, although it was the most extensive ever known, did not embrace more than one third of the globe.

5. Lastly, it is stated that "all who dwell upon the earth shall worship" the beast: the only exception being those whose names are "written in the Lamb's book of life." But this is equally inapplicable to the old Roman Empire: first, because two thirds of the earth's inhabitants were not subject to Rome; and secondly, because, although there was an established worship paid to the Emperor, yet the *Empire itself* was not an object of worship at all. For all these reasons, I am of opinion that the prediction has not been fulfilled in the past, and must, therefore, be referred to the future.

We arrive next, at the portion of this famous prophecy which is universally understood to refer to Antichrist. "I beheld," saith St. John, "another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six."

Now in this prophetic statement, it has been common amongst our writers to suppose that the character of the Pope was plainly indicated. But a fair examination, as it seems to me, will show that this interpretation cannot be consistently maintained.

1. They think the Pope may be well said to have "horns like a lamb," while he "spake as a dragon," because his profession as a Christian bishop caused him to wear the semblance of lamb-like gentleness, while his acts were those of a dragon, in persecution, cruelty, and blood. But however true the facts might be, in some parts of the Papal history, yet I cannot perceive that the words of the prophecy can be properly taken to warrant their conclusion. For it is not said that this beast looked like a lamb, but that he had "two horns like a lamb;" that is, small horns, which are by no means indicative of gentleness. The young ram has small horns; but as soon as they begin to grow, he is very apt to use them. And therefore, the horn, in prophecy, is the symbol of warlike power, which may be small at first, but rapidly grows dangerous. Thus, in the book of Daniel, the Antichrist is described as "a little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things."¹ . . . And I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the Ancient of days came."² The same prophet, in the following chapter, describes the kings of Media and Persia under the symbol of "a ram which had two horns;" and the figure occurs in many other parts of Scripture.

Here, therefore, we have nothing indicative of gentleness. For St. John saw "another *beast*," (in the Greek, *θηρίον*, *a wild beast*,) rise up with "two horns like a lamb," namely, like a young *ram's horns*, "and he spake like a dragon." I do not see how this can symbolize the Pope; but it agrees

¹ Dan. vii. 8.

² *Ibid.* 21.

perfectly with the true idea of Antichrist, as a ferocious warrior king, whose power will be small at the beginning, but will grow rapidly in his career of cruel despotism.

2. The prophet proceeds to say that this beast exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth all that are in the earth to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed, etc. And here it is ingeniously contended that the first beast, being the symbol of old heathen Rome, was substantially made an object of worship by the introduction of the Virgin and the saints, under the Papacy; that the great wonders performed by the beast signified the miracles claimed for the saints by the Church of Rome; that the image made to the first beast represented the image worship of Popery; and that this image, being caused to live and speak, presented a fair emblem of the Romish images, which are reported to wink and move their heads, and sometimes to utter words, by priestly management, etc.

This is certainly plausible enough, but quite inconsistent with the other prophecies on the same subject, and not really in accordance with the words of St. John.

1. First, because we have seen that Antichrist was not to come until the time of the great falling away, or the apostasy. But the sin of Popery is not in falling away from the original faith, because that has never been abandoned. It consists rather in the contrary, that Popery has presumed to add to the faith what is false in itself, and entirely destitute of any real authority. This is indeed an awful assumption, and yet it is no apostasy. Therefore, the time for Antichrist has not arrived, and hence it is not possible that the Pope should be the Antichrist.

2. Secondly, because the beast is said to have all the power of the other beast, who is expressly stated to have caused men to worship the dragon, or Satan, and also himself. Here, then, we have three objects of worship: the dragon, the first beast, and the second beast, which Anti-

christ will unite most probably in a rivalry to the true Christian Trinity, claiming for himself the highest power. But this is a very different thing from the idol worship of the old heathen, and certainly there is nothing which corresponds to it in the Papal system.

3. Because the prophet saith that Antichrist will have "power to give life to the image of the first beast, that it should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed." Here is *one* beast, and *one* image, with *real* life, which is no proper symbol of a multitude of images having no life at all, but only made to imitate life by machinery. Moreover, this living image causes the faithful to be killed, a work of barbarity to which the Romish images have never been devoted.

4. Because St. John here states that the beast "doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men." But no one will pretend that the Pope has ever done or undertaken to do either this or any other public miracle.

The next clause in this prophecy of Antichrist sets forth his power as causing "all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." And here, again, we have a clear proof that the Pope cannot be Antichrist, for it is impossible to find any act corresponding to this, in the whole Papal history.

The concluding verse, however, is thought to be quite applicable; when St. John saith, "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the *number of the beast*: for it is *the number of a man*; and his number is *Six hundred threescore and six*."

The ancients, as is well known, used the letters of their alphabet for numbers, and the Greek letters which express

this number, 666, are found in the word *Lateinos*, the Greek form for the word *Latinus*, or Latin. This was first suggested by the martyr Irenæus, who was the Bishop of Lyons in the second century. And our Protestant writers accept the statement as a good proof that the Pope is Antichrist; because the Popes are Latins in nation, in race, in habits, and in language, and no term could be employed which describes them better.

But here again is an argument which indeed looks plausible enough at first sight, while, nevertheless, it will be found altogether worthless in the light of fair examination, even if we set aside, for a moment, the counter evidence which renders the conclusion so utterly inadmissible.

1. For, in the first place, we must remember that the prophet presents this number 666 as the number of *a man*, — not signifying the title of a long succession of men, as in the case of the Papacy, nor expressing the name of a nation, or of a race, or of a language, or of an office, but giving the name of a single individual — “a man.” Therefore, this word *Latinus*, in order to make it agree with the prophecy, should at least have been the customary name of the Popes, as Pharaoh was the name assumed by the kings of ancient Egypt, and Cæsar was the name of all the emperors of Rome. But so far is this from any accordance with the truth of history, that the name *Latinus* does not once appear in the long succession of the Popes, nor has it ever belonged, either personally or officially, to a single individual amongst them.

2. In the next place, it is not candid to quote the venerable authority of Irenæus in favor of this word *Latinus*, without honestly stating the fact, which I shall prove by and by when we come to the testimony of the Fathers, namely, that this eminent bishop and martyr did not confine his suggestion to that name, nor did he even recommend it as the best key to open the mystery. On the contrary, he tells us that he had found *three names* which corresponded to the

number 666. The first was *Euanthes*, which he did not adopt, probably because its signification was too good for the character of *Antichrist*. The second was *Lateinos*. But the third, which he altogether preferred, was *Titan*. And he gives his reasons for preferring it, namely, because the name *Titan* was expressive of gigantic power, kingly majesty, and inordinate ambition ; all of which would belong to Antichrist in their most atrocious forms of action.

Now this reasoning of Irenæus ought to have been set forth by our Protestant writers, if they meant to avail themselves of his authority. For it is manifestly just. The Titans were well known, in the accepted fables of antiquity, as the giants who made war against Jupiter, the idol whom the heathen Greeks and Romans worshipped, believing him to be the Supreme Deity. But Jupiter overcame them by his superior power. And here we have an example of what often occurs in the systems of paganism, where an important truth was distorted into a false tradition. For the rebellion of Satan and his host against the true God, and His casting them down to earth, was doubtless the foundation of the whole Titanic history. And hence we may readily understand why Irenæus would be impressed with the aptness of the name to Antichrist, who should rise at the latter day, in the most audacious rebellion against the Almighty, and be signally condemned to ruin. And thus, when the eminent Bishop of Lyons discovered that the name corresponded so perfectly with the number 666, he could hardly avoid giving it the decided preference, as being so completely fitted to the fulfillment of the prophecy.

On the whole survey, therefore, of this portion of the Apocalyptic vision, I think it must be obvious that it cannot apply to the Pope. The beast was a man, and not a succession of men. The beast caused the dragon, and the other beast which preceded him, to be worshipped along with himself. The beast performed miracles, causing fire to descend from heaven. The beast set a mark on the

hands and foreheads of his subjects, without which no man could buy or sell. The beast gave life to the image of the first beast, and killed all who refused to adore it. And the name of the beast was indicated by the number 666. Not one of those statements, in my humble opinion, can be fairly made to indicate the Papacy. They will all be manifested at the appointed time, beyond question, for the prophets of the Lord have been inspired to reveal them. But that time is still future ; and the learned ingenuity which has been so largely exhibited in the effort to find them in the history of the past, is only one of the many proofs that the best men may be led by theological zeal to adopt an erroneous conclusion.

Fifth Chapter.

Babylon the Great.

THE next remarkable chapter on this subject, which is claimed as a very decisive evidence in the opinion of our Protestant writers, is the seventeenth of the Revelation, which it may be best to transcribe in full : —

“ And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet-color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and *shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition*: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world), when they behold the beast that was, and is not,

and yet is. And here is the mind that hath wisdom. The *seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth*. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a *short space*. And the beast that was, and is not, even *he is the eighth*, and is of the seven, and *goeth into perdition*. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings *one hour with the beast*. These have one mind, and shall *give their power and strength unto the beast*. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall *hate the whore*, and shall *make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire*. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And *the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*•

The usual Protestant explanation of this remarkable prophecy is very ingenious and plausible. The beast that carries the woman is supposed to be the secular empire of Rome, which was, and is not, because it has disappeared, and "yet is," because it survives in the kingdoms which arose out of its ruins.

The woman seated on the beast is the city of the Pope, sustained by this secular power, and governing it, in all the pomp of outward splendor and magnificence.

This woman is said to be seated upon the seven heads of the beast, which are "seven mountains," and she is declared to be "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." In both of these passages, Rome, the special centre of Popery, is plainly indicated, because that is, of old, the "seven hilled" city, and has, for many centuries, reigned over the kingdoms of Europe. But the time shall come when those kingdoms shall be united against Rome; and the beast, or the secular power, shall arise

again in its old imperial strength, and the ten kingdoms shall give their power to it, and destroy Rome and Popery, and consign them to utter ruin.

This exposition is apparently quite satisfactory. But nevertheless, it seems to me encumbered with difficulties which I, at least, am unable to reconcile.

1. For the beast with the seven heads and ten horns is clearly the same which we have already seen in the thirteenth chapter ; and the other beast, with two horns like a lamb but speaking like a dragon, is admitted, on all sides, to be the Antichrist. But he is represented as entirely united to the first beast, and causing all men to worship him and his living image, under peril of death. Now if the Pope be Antichrist, and Rome is to be destroyed by the beast to whom the ten kings give their power, because it is the seat of Antichrist, while yet the beast and Antichrist are represented as being in perfect union, there seems to be a strange incongruity. For the dragon (*i. e.*, Satan) "gave his seat and his power to the first beast."¹ And the second beast (the Antichrist) "exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast."² How then shall he be the destroyer of Rome and Popery, if the Pope be the Antichrist? Would it not be destroying himself? Certainly it cannot be denied that God could compel him to commit this act of suicide ; but does it seem to be in harmony with the other prophecies, especially that of St. Paul, who saith that the Lord shall consume that son of perdition with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of his coming?³

2. But there are serious difficulties in the way of the common opinion that the woman sitting upon the beast is the symbol of the city of Rome at all. For first, she is called "*Babylon the Great.*" And this name is so prominent in the Old Testament as the head of the old Assyrian

¹ Chap. xiii. 2.

² Verse 12.

³ 2 Thess. ii. 8.

empire, where Satan was so long and so victoriously supreme for centuries, that it cannot be transferred to any other without the clearest evidence. Rome was indeed the mistress city at the time when St. John beheld the vision, and Babylon was in ruins. But Jerusalem was also in ruins; yet we know that it shall arise again, to far more than its former greatness. And Babylon may also arise again, before that day, and hold a larger preëminence than ever, until she shall be finally destroyed after Antichrist¹ is overcome by the power of the Redeemer.

3. The woman is further called "Mystery, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth." But this would surely apply with much more propriety to Babylon than to Rome under the Papacy. The term "Mother," of course, implies parentage. And the harlots and abominations of the earth must be understood to refer to idolatry. But Babylon was the oldest patron of idolatry, and from her imperial power it spread throughout the world; whereas the Pope never held authority over more than a sixth part of the earth's inhabitants, and that authority arose in the seventh century of the Christian era. Moreover, the idolatry of Rome, however false and evil we may deem it, was in subordination to the worship of the true God; whereas the idolatry of Babylon was absolute and overwhelming, as we see clearly from the statements of the sacred writers of the Old Testament, especially the Book of Daniel, with which the evidence of all profane histories entirely agrees.

4. And the word "Mystery," given to this mother of harlots, is in harmony with the name of Babylon, because the old heathen had made it an established element in their Satanic systems from the earliest times. Thus we know that "The Mysteries" were secret religious assemblies, which, long before the days of St. John, had been imported into the empire, and were protected and encour-

¹ See on this subject the very interesting work, called *Briefs on Prophetic Themes*, by a Member of the Boston Bar.

aged by legal authority. It is certain that they had the "Eleusinian Mysteries;" the "Samothracian Mysteries," in honor of Jupiter; the "Dionysian Mysteries," in honor of Bacchus; the "Orphic Mysteries," supposed to be the origin of the Eleusinian. And besides these, they had the "Mysteries of Isis," derived from Egypt, and very popular in heathen Rome.

All these "Mysteries" were secret societies, and the members were bound, by solemn oath, not to divulge their proceedings. They were established institutions in the old heathen idolatry, and the very word used by St. John was their well-known appellation. But the system of the Pope has nothing corresponding to them, and never had at any time. On the contrary, it is notorious that secret societies are expressly disowned and discouraged by the Papal Church. Of course I admit that Mystery, in a general sense, belongs to their system, as it also belongs to our own. The Bible contains a vast amount of truth which may be well said to involve mystery too deep and too high for any human mind to explain. But our controversy with the Pope has nothing to do with mystery. We do not reject any of the errors of Rome because they are mysteries. Our ground of objection is, that those errors are unauthorized and dangerous additions to the true faith of the inspired Apostles, unknown to the Primitive Church, and hostile to her celestial system in doctrine, in worship, and in government. And this is surely reason enough for the Reformation, which, under God, swept them all away.

5. It is plausibly urged, however, that the Papal power must be intended by the prophecy, because "the seven heads of the beast" are said to be "seven mountains on which the woman sitteth," and that the woman "is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth." This is plausible, undoubtedly, and deserves examination.

That the city of Rome was built originally on seven *hills* is admitted, and hence it was called the *seven-hilled* city.

But the prophecy speaks of seven *mountains*, and that term has never been applied to the trifling elevations in ancient Rome, nor can it be thus applied without an evident absurdity. I doubt, moreover, whether the seven heads of the beast which carried the woman should be explained in so narrow and topographical a style as this. The beast had seven heads and ten horns, and the dragon, *i. e.* Satan himself, gave him his seat and his power, so that he was an object of universal *worship* — the very embodiment of blasphemy and the foulest idolatry in all the world. This is perfectly clear, from the description of the same beast in the thirteenth chapter. But the *heads* of the beast were the parts which held the organs of speech, and from them he was to utter his false and Satanic doctrines. Therefore when the woman is said to sit upon, or be supported by these seven heads, it seems to me far more reasonable to understand that she is sustained by the demoniac principles and blasphemous falsehoods of idolatry. The awful magnitude of these, is intimated by the word *mountains*. For they had involved the world for ages in the most gigantic manifestation of entire apostasy from the true God, and would be ultimately followed by that great Antichrist who should “sit in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”

6. It is a fact which favors this exposition that there have been seven well-marked systems of heathen idolatry, prevalent on the globe: the old Assyrian, which was the mother of them all; the Egyptian, the Greek and Roman, the Hindoo, the idolatry of Buddha, of the Grand Llama, and the Scandinavian or Northern idolatry. And the immediate precursor of the great Antichrist, with his seven heads, will supersede them all, when he claims over the whole his own Satanic mastery. These, then, I apprehend, will be the support of the woman, when old Babylon the Great shall rise again, “the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.” And hence I cannot see any probable

ground for sinking these *mountains* of diabolic idolatry down to the small notion that they only symbolize seven petty hills of earth, under the city of Rome.

7. There is still, however, another incongruity in the common interpretation. The beast is represented as having seven heads and ten horns. I suppose the horns are to be understood as standing on the heads, which is certainly the natural place for them. But these horns are said to belong to the beast, and the angel explains them in the prophecy of Daniel to be ten kings or kingdoms,¹ three of which are to be subdued by the Antichrist. Hence, in the chapter of the Revelation which is now under review, the beast comes forth as at first with ten horns; yet the angel² adverts to the prophecy of Daniel, where he speaks of *seven*, of which "five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." This doubtless refers to the great Antichrist, who will be a destroying warrior king, an incarnate demon. The five kings who had fallen were probably five heathen kings who had been subjugated. The one who remained I presume to be the emperor at the time when St. John saw the vision. The beast that was, and is not, who had not yet come, was to be the eighth, and was of the seven. That is to say, the imperial power of old Rome should cease, as it has long done; but this was a *heathen* power, until the establishment of Christianity. Then came the wound in one of the seven heads of the beast, spoken of in the thirteenth chapter, because the Greek and Roman idolatry was banished by the Gospel and appeared no more. But the beast still continued through the rest of the heathen world; and in the end, when the great apostasy shall arrive, he will have that "deadly wound healed," and will display seven heads and ten horns, prepared for the final onslaught of Anti-

¹ Daniel vii. 24.

² Rev. xvii. 10.

christ, with greater power than ever: though, thanks be to God, it will be only "for a short time."

8. In reference to this, therefore, the Angel proceeds to say: "The ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings *one hour* with the beast." And here, as it seems to me, is a complete proof that the seven heads of the beast cannot be fairly understood to mean the seven hills of Rome, according to the Protestant interpretation. For the ten horns are ten kings. And the horns must be presumed to stand on the seven heads. But how should ten kings have their future kingdoms on the seven little hills which lie under one city?

9. This notion, therefore, seems to me to degrade the whole dignity and importance of the prophecy. To my mind it seems far more reasonable to understand the seven heads to be the seven vast systems of idolatry, towering like mountains in the earth, on which Great Babylon shall be seated in the pomp and pride of her old abominations, as the mother of all the spiritual harlotry of the world; that the ten kings, professedly heathen but really indifferent to all religion, shall give their power to the beast, willing to maintain the old idolatry until the coming of Antichrist; and that he will abolish all other worship besides his own, and being resisted by Babylon, will turn the power of the ten kings against her, and burn her with fire. By this the whole prediction appears to me consistent, and free from any serious difficulty.¹

¹ It may seem, at first sight, that the explanation of those seven mountains as signifying seven systems of idolatry, is not to be sustained by any authority. But under the head of "mountains" in *Cruden's Concordance*, the reader will find *four* significations given, which justify the figure, namely: 1. "The idolatrous inhabitants of the mountains;" 2. "Such powerful obstacles as hinder the progress of the Gospel;" 3. "Idols that were worshipped in mountains or high places;" and 4. "The most lofty and powerful enemies." The language of metaphor, which is so frequent in the prophecies, is the

10. But I have yet to notice the last verse of the chapter, which our Protestant writers usually consider quite conclusive to prove that Babylon the great is the city of Rome, and the centre of the Papacy. The Angel saith to St. John, "The woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." And it is taken for granted that as Rome was then the mistress city of the mighty empire, the woman must be Rome, which the prophet called "Babylon," in order to avoid exciting the indignation of the government.

Now the fact is true, doubtless, that Rome was then the mistress city of that greatest of empires; but it is not true that "she reigned over the kings of the earth," for the very plain reason that two thirds of the earth were not under her dominion. Neither can I understand that St. John

universal language of mankind. That this is the language of the Angel in saying that the woman sits upon the seven heads, and that these are seven mountains, is very certain. For literally, no woman can be conceived of as sitting upon seven mountains. Neither is the case rendered more plain, when the woman is afterwards explained by a great city, for no city was ever built on seven mountains.

But the metaphor of a mountain is sustained by many examples, as expressive of any great system, as when the prophet Daniel (ii. 35) saith that "the stone that smote the image became a great *mountain* and filled the whole earth," we know that he referred to the final triumph of the Gospel. So Christ Himself, in His divine nature, is called a *Rock*. So Isaiah (xl. 4) saith, "Every mountain shall be made low," meaning that every great obstacle to religious truth shall be laid prostrate. So Zechariah (iv. 7) saith, "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain," applying the word to the towering system of idolatry, sustained by the great powers of the earth, under the guidance of Satan. So Isaiah (xli. 15) saith, "Thou [the Lord] shalt thresh the mountains," meaning that God would destroy idolatry, though it towered like mountains in all the earth.

And such is still the language of poetry:—*Oceans* of trouble, *storms* of calamity, *clouds* of sorrow, *mountains* of difficulty, *rocks* of defence, the *sun* of prosperity, the *light* of truth, the *darkness* of error, the *fire* of jealousy, the *thunder* of wrath, etc.

could have given her the name of Babylon, in order to avoid exciting the indignation of the government, because that name was not imposed by St. John, but was *written on the forehead of the woman*. And the statement of the Angel, that the woman is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth, might have been translated more accurately by saying: "that great city *having dominion* over the kings of the earth;" for the Greek original is, ἡ πόλις ἡ μεγάλη ἡ ἔχουσα βασιλείαν. And this more literal version would at once remove the apparent difficulty, since the great city would not necessarily refer to Rome, but rather to some other city *having universal dominion*, which Rome certainly had not. I grant, indeed, that the Pope claims the right to universal dominion, as the sole vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ; but this is a spiritual dominion, and it is notorious that he never had the power to enforce even that. So far from it, indeed, that this very assumption produced the great schism between the East and the West in the Church itself, and the Pope has at no period, however prosperous, had more than one sixth of mankind subject to his priestly authority, while his secular power was always a very limited one, — the most insignificant in Europe.

12. The argument drawn by our Protestant writers from the scarlet color of the beast, and the purple, scarlet, gold, precious stones and pearls which adorned the woman, will hardly serve the purpose of a serious application to Popery. But as some good men have attached importance to it, I shall merely suggest that those same colors and splendid jewelry and gold may be found directed by the Almighty for the tabernacle, the garments of the high priest and the temple, under the divine system laid down by Himself, for His chosen Israel. The Oriental Churches of Greece and Russia also have quite as much of this magnificence as Rome. And the New Jerusalem is described, in this same book of the Revelation, with still greater marks of splendor. In the face of all this, it is rather unwise, in my humble opin-

ion, to insist that because the Pope exhibits the same sort of outward adornment, he must needs be the great Antichrist. The outward display of glory and beauty, in itself, is no test of truth or error, and we must have a very different standard of judgment from this, in order to decide between them.

Sixth Chapter.

Babylon not yet Destroyed.

THE view which I have here set forth, namely, that the city which shall be destroyed by the beast and the ten kings is Babylon the Great, and not Rome, will doubtless be thought sufficiently refuted by the common opinion that Babylon is destroyed already. And this I believe to be another error, entirely unwarranted by Scripture. Babylon, it is true, has disappeared ages ago as an empire. Babylon has also been laid in ruins, as a city. And yet it is demonstrable, from the clear language of prophecy, that Babylon is not yet destroyed in accordance with the declarations of the Word of God.

For thus saith Isaiah: "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the *Chaldees' excellency*, shall be *as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah*. It shall *never* be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: *neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.*"¹

"Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to

¹ Is. xiii. 19, 20.

the sides of the pit. . . . For I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant. . . . I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water : and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts.”¹

The time fixed for this destruction of Babylon is expressly stated by the prophet Jeremiah to be when Israel shall be restored ; and this is conclusive proof that it will be in the last days, the days of Antichrist, immediately before the second advent of the Saviour. For thus we read : “The word that the Lord spake against *Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans* by Jeremiah the prophet. Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard ; publish, and conceal not : say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces. . . . For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein : they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast. *In those days, and in that time*, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping : they shall go and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.”²

This passage is to be especially noted, because it fixes the destruction of Babylon *in those days and in that time* when Israel and Judah shall be restored to their own land, and seek the Lord in penitence and faith. And here we have a very plain demonstration that as this event is certainly future, so likewise must be the great and final fall of Babylon.

But this important truth is not left to a single declaration. For thus we read : “Therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel ; Behold, I will punish the king

¹ Is. xiv. 4, 12-15, 22, 23.

² Jer. l. 1-5.

of Babylon and his land, as I have punished the king of Assyria. And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon Mount Ephraim and Gilead. *In those days and in that time*, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve.”¹ This close connection between the fall of Babylon and the deliverance of Israel, runs throughout the whole chapter: “Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The children of Israel and the children of Judah were oppressed together: and all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go. Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon. A sword is upon the *Chaldeans*, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon, and upon her princes, and upon her wise men. . . . for it is the land of graven images, and they are mad upon their idols. Therefore the wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein: and *it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbor cities thereof*, saith the Lord; so shall no man abide there, neither shall any son of man dwell therein. . . . At the noise of the taking of Babylon the earth is moved, and the cry is heard among the nations.”²

And yet again in the next chapter, we read: “For Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts; though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel. Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord’s vengeance; he will render unto her a recompense. Babylon hath been

¹ Jer. l. 18-20.

² *Ibid.* 33-35, 38-40, 46.

a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: . . . for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies. The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness: Come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God."¹ "And I will render unto *Babylon* and to all the *inhabitants of Chaldea* all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the Lord. Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth: . . . and *they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations*; but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the Lord. . . . And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant. . . . *The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. Her cities are a desolation and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.*"²

These repeated declarations, which so plainly connect the deliverance of the chosen people with the ultimate fall of Babylon, — the old Babylon in Chaldea, the real mother of idolatry and all the abominations of the earth, and the constant enemy of Israel, — are of the first importance to a proper understanding of the seventeenth chapter of the Revelation of St. John. For we have the same connection intimated in that wonderful book. The fifteenth chapter of it presents the seven angels having the seven last plagues, in which is filled up the wrath of God. Then the prophet beholds in vision "them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name . . . and they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." The next chapter gives a fearful picture

¹ Jer. li. 5-10.² *Ibid.* 24-26, 37, 42, 43.

of the divine judgments upon the seat of the beast, and the way of the kings of the East (the ten kings) is prepared by a special drying up of the great river Euphrates.¹ Then we read of the device of Satan, the dragon sending forth the spirits of devils to work miracles, and rouse the kings of the earth to a final struggle; then the final judgment in the great battle of God Almighty, when the coming of Christ is plainly declared.² Then the terrific earthquake, and the ruin of Babylon, whose character as the mother of harlots and abominations, her old reign and her destruction by fire, are set forth symbolically, and explained by the angel, in the seventeenth chapter.

Now we cannot possibly bring these prophetic statements into harmony, without understanding that Babylon shall ascend again, to be the seat of the beast whom St. John saw rising out of the earth, as stated in the thirteenth chapter. And hence it results that Babylon, though long in ruins, is not destroyed. And this is intimated by the prophet Daniel in the seventh chapter,³ where we read: "As concerning the rest of the beasts" (one of which, as all admit, was the old Assyrian empire, having Babylon for the chief city), "they had their dominion taken away, yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time." And such is manifestly the fact with respect to the others. The Greek and the Roman empires have lost their dominion, yet they live; and the old Assyrian and Babylonian empires also live, in the power of the Turkish empire, under the false prophet. Nay, even the very locality of the ancient city is so far from having undergone the tremendous destruction so clearly predicted in the prophecies, that it is inhabited, and carries on a considerable amount of commerce at this day.

In proof of this I shall take the liberty of making some extracts from the very interesting work of Mr. Lord, entitled, "Briefs on Prophetic Themes, by a member of the Bos-

¹ Verse 12.

² Verse 13.

³ Verse 12.

ton Bar," published in Boston, A. D. 1864, by Dutton & Co. And it gives me pleasure to acknowledge my obligations to the author, for turning my attention to the subject, to which I frankly confess that I had previously devoted but very little labor or reflection.

The first extract is from the book of Colonel Chesney, who was the commander of the expedition for the survey of the rivers Euphrates and Tigris carried on by order of the British Government in the years 1835, 1836, and 1837, published by Longmans, in 1850:—

"The river (*i. e.* the Euphrates) rises," saith this author, "at no great distance from the shores of the Euxine, and in its course to the Indian Ocean, almost skirts those of the Mediterranean. . . . The Euphrates at one time formed the principal link connecting Europe commercially with the East. Its historical celebrity has excited in its favor an interest superior to that which has been felt for any other river: and it may be reasonably expected that when its advantages shall be fully known, and duly appreciated, it will rise to a high degree of *political and commercial importance*."

"In a range of more than 1780 miles from its eastern source, this river may be said to unite three great and important seas, which, without it, would be destitute of any water communication with each other, while the varied productions of the intervening territory would, in a great measure, be lost to the rest of the world."

"*Bir* is one of the most frequented of all the passages into Mesopotamia, and about sixteen large passage-boats are kept . . . for the use of the caravans, which occasionally number 5000 camels."

"This great river proceeds through the date-groves, across a bare country onwards to Hillah. *This town is built on a part of Babylon, and chiefly with materials obtained from its ruins.* It contained in 1831, the time of my first visit, about 10,000 inhabitants, whose dwellings are princi-

pally on the right bank ; the line of houses forming an obtuse angle, almost midway between the Mujellebe and the still more celebrated Birs Nimroud."

One of the officers belonging to the expedition writes as follows, namely : —

"The noble and interesting river Euphrates is far too celebrated to require from me more than a fair view of the prospect it offers for establishing an economical and more rapid communication between Great Britain and her Indian possessions, than has hitherto been attained. The brilliant prospects of a new channel being opened to our enterprising mercantile world through a steam establishment on the Euphrates, ought to awaken our best energies."

We may next notice this extract from the letter of W. Ainsworth, Esq., Surgeon and Geologist to the expedition : —

"The river Euphrates is a navigable stream. I am acquainted with it . . . from the Taurus, to its embouchure in the Persian Gulf, a distance of upwards of 1200 miles. In a commercial point of view, the close communication established with so great an emporium of trade as Bagdad is of the very first importance ; . . . but there are also on the river between Kurnah and Felujah, large towns, as Sheikh-el-Shuyakh and *Hillah*" (Babylon), "and powerful tribes, as the Mountejik Arabs, who have long been actuated by the spirit of commercial enterprise. . . ."

"The advantages which are presented by the opening of the navigation of the river Euphrates, belong to the universal civilization, as well as to the increase, of national power. The waters of this great river flow past the habitations of four millions of human beings. . . . The intellectual powers of the descendants from the most noble stocks of the human race are not extinct in their present fallen representatives, and it would be difficult to say to what extent civilization might flourish, when revived in its most antique home."

"The national importance of this navigation is of the most comprehensive character. All acquainted with the history of the communication of nations which, as Montesquieu has ably pointed out, is the history of commerce, must be aware that those circumstances which led to the annihilation of the commerce of the East, would be revolutionized by the opening now proposed to be effected; and that while civilization might be confidently expected to return to its almost primeval seat, it would do so under a very different aspect, and with vastly improved means."

Dr. Layard, writing on the same subject to an eminent English merchant in 1843, makes the following remarks, namely:—

"The establishment of this navigation would probably lead to that of English mercantile houses at all the chief places of trade on the Euphrates, etc.

"The wheat and the barley are particularly fine, nor is it very uncommon to have three successive crops of grain in some places. The gardens yield grapes in abundance, also oranges, peaches, nectarines, figs, apples, pomegranates, and other fruits. . . . The scenery is at once beautiful and strikingly grand: the mountains are seen rising abruptly from the sea to an elevation of four or five thousand feet, their sides being covered with dense forests, composed of gigantic chestnut, beech, walnut, alder, poplar, willow, ash, maple, and box trees, with firs towards their summits, and a magnificent underwood of rhododendron, bay, and hazel, etc. The less elevated grounds produce cotton, hemp, tobacco, and raw silk in abundance; besides precious stones, such as the turquoise, beryl, crystal, and ruby. Besides the more valuable metals, gold and silver, Armenia abounds in copper, lead, iron, saltpetre, sulphur, bitumen, quarries of coal, marble, and jasper, with several mineral springs which have been celebrated for many ages.

"The numerous towns along the Euphrates, and the extensive population, partly permanent and partly nomadic,

on the banks of that river, will ultimately require several stations; but for the present, one should be at Hillah (Babylon), and another at Anah, and a third at Beles.

“Though the subject has only been considered relatively to the people in their present state, it should not be forgotten that Mesopotamia possesses as many advantages as, or perhaps more than, any other country in the world. Although greatly changed by the neglect of man, those portions which are still cultivated, as the country about Hillah (Babylon), show that the region has all the fertility ascribed to it by Herodotus, who considered its productions as equal to one third of those furnished by all Asia. Being equal, and in many respects even superior, to Egypt, with regard to its position and its capabilities, the time need not be distant when the date-groves of the Euphrates may be interspersed with flourishing towns, surrounded with fields of the finest wheat, and the most productive plantations of indigo, cotton, and sugar-cane.”

These copious extracts are ample enough to prove that Babylon, though the ancient city is in ruins, is not yet destroyed. The flourishing town of Hillah, with 10,000 inhabitants, stands on a part of the old foundations. The descendants of the former race are still there. And the commercial enterprise of Great Britain looks upon the region with admiring eyes, and contemplates the establishment of a system which, once commenced, may be fairly expected to produce a restoration to more than its long past greatness.

Erected again by Mammon, the ruling spirit of our world, and opening so tempting a channel for the craving impulse of cupidity in trade and manufactures, who shall say that the immense advantages of its natural position may not raise it to a towering rank among the nations of the earth? And when the time draws near for the return of the Jews to their own land, and the rebuilding of their temple, why may not the great Antichrist make Babylon

his chosen seat of empire, preëminent as it will be in wealth, in luxury, in power, in pride, in wickedness, and sunk into the rankest infidelity towards the authority of Heaven? Then while a portion of Israel, warned by their own prophets and oppressed by the tyrant, will flee from her corruption, and seek Zion in penitence and sorrow, the recorded judgment will descend, in all the tremendous forms of infliction set forth in the divine oracles. Antichrist, in his pride, will abolish all other idolatry, in order to concentrate it upon himself. Opposed by Babylon, he will proceed, with his ten confederate kings, and burn it with fire; and the wrath of the Lord will sink it into total ruin. Then Antichrist will seize upon Jerusalem; and bring his blasphemous usurpation to its utmost climax, by seating himself in the temple, and claiming to be God. The glorious Redeemer will appear with His heavenly host, and strike down the demoniac usurper. And the Satanic beast whose nature it is to revel in human misery, after raging through the earth in cruelty and blood, will be cast into the abyss of flame, and the kingdom of the saints will be established in peace and righteousness.

Such would seem to be the nearest approach which can be attained to the interpretation of the prophecy, because it is in harmony with the language of inspiration. But the whole of this mysterious subject, so far as it touches the future, is open to the varieties of individual opinion, and no certainty can be claimed for any human judgment, beyond the plain teaching of the Word of God.

Seventh Chapter.

Babylon the Great is not Rome.

LET me next present to my reader's attention the letter of a gentleman who had long resided in India, and whose convictions were formed from his personal observation of facts : —

“ A fair view of the prophecies against Babylon, as given in Isaiah and Jeremiah, will show that they have not been fully and finally accomplished. Much has been done in demonstration of judgment against her, but the last and complete ruin is yet to come. A stone was bound to a book, and cast into the Euphrates, and it was said, ‘ Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her.’¹ This speaks clearly of one final and irrecoverable ruin ; but Babylon rose repeatedly from the ruin that at first assailed her. Keith's book on prophecy shows that she was several hundred years being brought to desolation, and that her end was not sudden but most gradual. Cyrus took her more than five hundred years before Christ. Alexander took and attempted to rebuild her, two hundred years after Cyrus. In that interval her walls were reduced, and she was much shorn of her power and wealth. She was finally brought to desolation by the building of Seleucia and Ctesiphon in her neighborhood, by the successors of Alexander, who thereby succeeded in drawing away the inhabitants from Babylon. She did not fall once and for all — suddenly — never to rise, like a stone cast into the waters.

¹ Jer. li. 63, 64.

"It is said that 'they shall not take of thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for a foundation.'¹ But the ruin of the buildings at Babylon has been mainly accelerated by the removal of the materials with which she was built, for the construction of other towns in the neighborhood.

"It is said that this land of Babylon 'shall be a desolation without an inhabitant ;'² but there is now the modern Arab town of Hillah, and two villages besides, together with several gardens and date plantations, within the limits of the ruins.

"It is said that she shall be 'a land where no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby.' Now, besides myriads of Asiatics, many Europeans have passed thereby and thoroughly examined the place.

"It is said that 'the Arabian shall not pitch his tent there.'³ In 1835, when I was there, I saw marks of an Arab encampment which must have halted there for several weeks.

"I believe then that Babylon will be rebuilt, and rise to the splendor described in the book of Revelation, and that she will then suddenly and finally be brought to ruin. There are facilities in that country for bringing about such prosperity in a wonderfully short time. The soil is all mould and clay, without a single stone, and productive if watered. Formerly, there were canals in all directions, fed by the Tigris and the Euphrates. It is only necessary to repair the banks of these to make Babylon the most fertile land on the globe. Wealth is so easily attained that in a few years the Pasha of Bagdad, fifty miles from Babylon, by withholding tribute from the Sultan, was enabled to have a court rivaling that of Erzeroum."

Here, then, we see that other minds have formed the same conclusion as Mr. Lord, and, so far as I can see, with perfect correctness. Indeed, I am unable to imagine how a firm faith in the prophecies can lead to any other, when

¹ Jer. li. 26.

² *Ibid.* 29.

³ Isaiah xiii. 20.

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the subject is fully examined. For the question stands thus: — The prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah declare, in repeated statements of the most explicit kind, that Babylon — the *Babylon of Chaldea* — shall be destroyed as Sodom and Gomorrah, *suddenly*, totally; that it shall be a *desolation*; that *no man shall dwell therein*; that *the sea shall cover it*, etc. The passages have been set forth in full, and it is not necessary to repeat them.

But the present condition of Babylon proves incontestably that these prophecies have not been fulfilled. She sunk *gradually* into ruin; not *suddenly*, nor like Sodom and Gomorrah. The land is not a desolation; men have all along inhabited it; a flourishing town, Hillah, with 10,000 inhabitants, and two villages besides, stand within the limits of the ruins. In a word, so manifest is the contrast, that the common notion of these prophecies having been already fulfilled, seems to my mind entirely indefensible.

Moreover, we have seen the express connection of the period appointed for the fall of Babylon, with that which is fixed for the return of the Jews: "In those days and at that time," saith the prophet, and in not *one* but *several* places, clearly referring both events to the times of the great Antichrist.

These prophecies are in perfect accordance with the book of the Revelation, where we read of the total ruin of Babylon the Great. They have not been accomplished, but they *will be*, because they are "the Word of the Lord" which cannot "pass away till all be fulfilled." And therefore, in order that they may be fulfilled, Babylon will be rebuilt, and become, as she was in former days, "the beauty of the Chaldeans," the great centre of commercial wealth and splendor. We have seen the dawning of that day in the enterprise contemplated by the government of Great Britain. And it may require another century or more to attain the full result, when she shall be ripe for her final destruction. Yet it shall all come to pass in its appointed season. Not one of those celestial predictions shall fail.

And in perfect harmony with this is the description of the fall of Babylon the Great, which fills the eighteenth chapter of the Revelation, a description which is little suited to Rome, but completely corresponds with the wealth and power of a vast commercial supremacy. For thus the angel proclaims with a strong voice, saying, "Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, for all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the *merchants of the earth* are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the *merchants of the earth* shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more: the *merchandise* of gold and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. The *merchants of these things*, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every *shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea*, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, *What city is like unto this great city!* And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying,

Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were *made rich all that had ships in the sea* by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate. . . . And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. . . . for thy *merchants were the great men of the earth*; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."

Here we see that the leading character of the restored Babylon will be the corruption and wickedness of a colossal commercial emporium, devoted to the worship of Mammon, the most subtle, potent, and successful of all the devils who have governed mankind since the world began. The repeated mention of the *merchants* who were made rich by her, the enumeration of the articles of commerce, the lamentation of the *ship-owners* and the *sailors*, who brought all foreign products to her port, saying, "What city is like unto this great city!" — all this, so little descriptive of Rome, and so much more adapted to London, marks the future ascendancy of Babylon, in just accordance with what she was in past ages, and what she will be again, in the time to come, when she stands once more preëminent in pride, in luxury, in licentiousness, and in rebellious infidelity as the Queen city of the world.

Commerce, in itself, when guarded by the laws of Christian probity, is undoubtedly a fair and just occupation for man. But "the love of money is the root of all evil," saith the Apostle. And the Saviour Himself declares that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."¹ And hence arises the universal and most powerful empire which commerce holds amongst mankind, namely, that it approaches in the guise of what, in itself, is right and beneficial, but is sure, with the vast majority, to advance with an increasing influence, until the lust of gain absorbs

¹ St. Matt. xix. 24.

the soul, and exerts a perfect mastery over every opposing principle.

But this lust of gain is the active motive of commerce ; and commerce affords its most tempting field of operation. The merchant princes are, even now, the great rulers of the world ; and the interests of commerce are the strongest bonds which unite the nations in peace, and the surest incentives to war when it is supposed that those interests are in danger. No power on earth, therefore, is so exacting as commercial power. No power attempts such mighty works, and overcomes such gigantic difficulties. No spirit is so craving in its demands, and none so impatient of rivalry. And hence it is that *Mammon* is the ruling demon amongst the great nations of the earth ; and, throughout the whole extent of Christendom, *covetousness*, which St. Paul expressly calls *IDOLATRY*, is the favorite and most absolute sin of human nature.

I have thus shown, I trust plainly, from the clear statements of the prophets, compared with her present condition, that Babylon has not been destroyed, though she certainly will be ; that her destruction will not take place until the return of the Jews ; that when the time arrives, she will be a vast commercial city, full of wealth and wickedness and idolatry — the idolatry of Mammon. I have also shown that the measures for her future greatness have already attracted the attention of the British Parliament ; that the river Euphrates, on which she stood, and still stands, will become again the main channel of intercourse with the East ; while her position is so commanding, and her advantages in all respects so superior, that no reason can be imagined why she should not become the proudest emporium of the world.

It has also been shown that these prophecies cannot be applied to Rome : —

1. Because the Babylon which is to be destroyed is ex-

pressly called the Babylon of Chaldea. For this is the language of the prophets : —

“Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chal-dees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah ;”¹ “A sword is upon the Chaldeans, saith the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of Babylon ;”² “I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea, all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the Lord.”³ I do not see how it is possible to interpret these words as being applicable to Rome, in Italy. They belong to the Babylon of Chaldea, and to no other city: in precise accordance with the name, written on the forehead of the mystic woman: “Mystery, *Babylon the Great.*”

2. It is further shown by her title as the “mother of harlots and abominations of the earth,” a title to which Rome has no claim whatever, because she could not be the *mother* of the idolatry that had its origin in Babylon and had overspread the earth more than 2,000 years before Papal Rome was in existence.

3. And lastly, the description of the great Babylon, as a vast *commercial emporium*, corresponds precisely with what Babylon was once, and may become again; while it is totally unlike Rome, which never was, and never can be, a city of commanding influence with the merchant princes of the world.

¹ Isaiah xiii. 19.

² Jer. l. 35.

³ *Ibid.* li. 24.

Eighth Chapter.

The Defeat of Antichrist.

THE nineteenth chapter of the Revelation of St. John presents the sublime thanksgiving for the fall of Babylon, followed by the marriage of the Lamb of God ; after which we read as follows : “ I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns ; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood : and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations : and he shall rule them with a rod of iron : and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. . . . And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the

horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth : and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

Here we see the advent of the Divine Redeemer, the "Word of God," the "King of kings and Lord of lords," to execute judgment upon Antichrist, the beast, and the false prophet. His sword "proceedeth out of his mouth," to represent the almighty power of His will : for "He speaks, and it is done; He commandeth," and all created things obey Him. His vesture, dipped in blood, refers to his stupendous sacrifice upon the Cross. The "armies of heaven" are the angelic host, in precise accordance with His own prediction that He would come "in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."¹ And His triumph over Antichrist, the beast, and the false prophet, is therefore immediate and complete, notwithstanding the "kings of the earth and their armies," in the madness of desperation, are gathered against Him.

The next chapter sets forth the binding of Satan, the "old Dragon," for a thousand years, and the resurrection of the saints, to live and reign with Christ ; during which happy period the dominion of the Lord will extend throughout the earth, and all shall know Him, "from the least to the greatest."

But while all will then profess their allegiance to His throne, there will be many who secretly cling to the service of idolatry. And therefore, as we may well believe, in order to separate the faithful from the ungodly, and to make manifest the hypocrisy of the false pretenders to holiness, the Lord will unloose Satan at the end of the Millennium, and permit him once more to exert his subtle art in deceiving the nations. And he will succeed again, in mustering a mighty host, to besiege the holy city of Jerusalem ; and "fire" shall come "down from God out of heaven" and devour them. Satan will then be finally "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false

¹ St. Mark viii. 38.

prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." The general resurrection of all the dead, the entire renovation of the heaven and the earth, and the final judgment, will take place, in strict fulfillment of the prophecies. The throne of the Almighty will be set up in the New Jerusalem; sin and death will be driven away; and the love of God will be supreme throughout the universe, in all its blessed fruits of everlasting purity and joy.

Having now gone over the testimony of the Scriptures on the subject of the great Antichrist, and shown, as I trust sufficiently, that he cannot, with any consistency, be confounded with the Pope of Rome, I shall proceed to the declarations of the Christian Fathers, which, on every topic involving the interpretation of the Word of God, are entitled to our most respectful attention.

Ninth Chapter.

Opinions of the Fathers.

THE famous Irenæus, who was the Bishop of Lyons, and signalized his faith by martyrdom in the fifth persecution under Septimus Severus (A. D. 202), wrote a valuable work, *Against Heresies*, which has come down to our day, partly in the original Greek, and more completely in an ancient Latin version. He was noted for his learning and his zeal; and as he flourished within seventy years after the death of the Apostle St. John, his testimony furnishes the best evidence of the opinions held at that early day by the Primitive Christians.

In order that my scholastic readers may have the evidence fairly before them, I shall transcribe the words of this and the other Fathers in the Latin version, only noting the substance of each paragraph as we pass along.

From St. Irenæus.

. . . . per ea quæ erunt sub Antichristo, ostenditur, quoniam existens apostata et latro, quasi Deus vult adorari; et quum sit servus, Regem se vult præconari. . . . Super hæc autem manifestavit et illud, quod a nobis per multa ostensum est, quoniam in Hierosolymis Templum dispositione veri Dei factum est. Ipse enim Apostolus ex sua persona diffinitive Templum illud dixit Dei.¹

Here we find that Irenæus declares Antichrist to be an apostate and a robber; that he should seek to be adored as

¹ S. Irenæi *Contra Hæreses*, lib. v. cap. xxv. p. 322.

God, and proclaim himself to be a king; and that this he should do *in the Temple at Jerusalem*.

Commenting on the prophecy of Daniel which assigns to Antichrist "a time, times, and the dividing of time," Irenæus is very clear:—

*Usque ad tempus temporum et dimidium tempus; hoc est, per triennium et sex menses, in quibus veniens regnabit super terram. . . . Et Dominus autem hoc item non credentibus sibi dicebat: Ego veni in nomine Patris mei, et non recepistis me: quum alius venerit in nomine suo, illum recipietis; alium dicens Antichristum, qui alienus est a Domino. . . . Quod et faciet in tempore regni sui: transferet regnum in eam [terrenam Hierusalem] et in templo Dei sedet, seducens eos qui adorant eum, quasi ipse sit Christus.*¹

By this we see that our author calls the time, times, and half a time *three years and six months*, during which Antichrist will reign upon the earth. He also repeats his statement that Antichrist will transfer his kingdom to *Jerusalem*, and will sit in the Temple of God, deluding those who adore him into believing that he is Christ.

Many Protestant writers have quoted against the Pope the declaration of Irenæus, that the number of Antichrist, 666, given in the Apocalypse, corresponds with the Greek word *Lateinos*, or *Latin*. But I have already stated that Irenæus mentions three names which agree with this mystic number, and the one which he prefers is not *Lateinos*, but *Titan*. These are his words:—

Quoniam autem non propter inopiam nominum habentium numerum nominis ejus dicimus hæc, sed propter timorem erga Deum et zelum veritatis: ΕΥΑΝΘΑΣ enim nomen habet numerum de quo quæritur: sed nihil de eo affirmamus. Sed et ΔΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ nomen habet sexcentorum sexaginta sex numerum: et valde verisimile est, quoniam novissimum Regnum hoc habet vocabulum. Latini enim sunt qui nunc regnant: sed non in hoc nos gloriabimur. Sed et ΤΕΙΤΑΝ, prima syllaba per duas Græcas vocales

¹ S. Irenæi *Contra Hæreses*, lib. v. cap. xxv. p. 323.

et scripta, omnium nominum quæ apud nos inveniuntur, magis fide dignum est. Etenim prædictum numerum habet in se, et litterarum est sex, singulis syllabis ex ternis litteris constantibus, et vetus, et semotum; neque enim eorum Regum, qui secundum nos sunt, aliquis vocatus est Titan; neque eorum, quæ publice adorantur, idolorum apud Græcos et barbaros habet vocabulum hoc: et divinum putatur apud multos esse hoc nomen, ut etiam sol Titan vocetur ab his qui nunc tenent: Et alias autem et antiquum, et fide dignum, et regale, magis autem et tyrannicum nomen. Quum autem vastaverit Antichristus hic omnia in hoc mundo, regnans annis tribus et mensibus sex, et sederit in Templo Hierosolymis; tunc veniet Dominus de cœlis in nubibus, in gloria Patris, illum quidem et obedientes ei in stagnum ignis mittens; adducens autem justis Regni tempora, hoc est, requietionem, septimam diem sanctificatam; et restituens Abrahæ promissionem hereditatis: in quo Regno ait Dominus, multos ab Oriente et Occidente venientes, recumbere cum Abraham, Isaac, et Jacob.¹

Here Irenæus clearly commends the name *Titan* as most worthy of confidence, and gives his reasons at large. And then he proceeds to say, that after Antichrist shall have reigned three years and a half, carrying desolation through the world, and shall sit in the Temple at Jerusalem, the Lord will come in clouds from heaven, with the glory of the Father, and consign him and all that obey him to the lake of fire, giving the kingdom to the just, which is the rest of the Holy Sabbath, and restoring to Abraham the promised inheritance; in which kingdom, saith the Lord, many shall come from the East and the West, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

From St. Ferome.

I proceed, next, to the opinions of the celebrated Jerome, which will be sufficiently manifest from the following extracts. Thus, in his commentary on Daniel xi., opposing

¹ S. Irenæi *Contra Hæreses*, lib. v. cap. xxx. pp. 329, 330.

the hypothesis of Porphyry, who applied this prophecy to Antiochus Epiphanes, Jerome saith :—

Nostri autem secundum superiorem sensum interpretantur omnia de Antichristo, qui *nasciturus est de populo Judæorum, et de Babylone venturus*.¹

Quod autem Antichristus *veniat usque ad summitatem montis sancti et inclyti, et ibi pereat*: Esaias plenius loquitur: Præcipit Dominus in monte sancto faciem dominatoris tenebrarum super omnes gentes, et eum qui dominatur cunctis populis.²

Et revelatus fuerit homo peccati. Diabolus scilicet. Filius perditionis. Quia eum quasi sibi natum, servitio possidebit, qui secundum Esaiam conturbare dicitur gentes. *Qui adversatur et extollitur, supra omne quod dicitur Deus, aut quod colitur, etc.* Supra omnem potentiam et æternitatem se jactabit, ut Sacramenta culturæ corrigere vel augere se dicat, *et templum Hierusalem reficere tentabit: omnesque legis ceremonias restaurare*, tantum ut veritatis Christi Evangelium solvat, *quæ res Judæis eum pro Christo suscipere suadebit*, in suo non Dei nomine venientem.³

In fine mundi hæc sit facturus Antichristus, qui consurgere habet de modica gente, id est de populo Judæorum, et tam humilis erit et despectus, ut ei non detur honor regius, et per insidias et fraudulentiam obtineat principatum, etc.⁴

Quia igitur consummato Antichristo et parente ejus diabolo, qui *conculcabat universam terram*, etc.⁵

Haud dubium quin Antichristus sit, qui in consummatione mundi dicitur esse venturus, etc.⁶

These extracts show that Jerome thought Antichrist would be born of the Jewish people, and would come from Babylon; that he would perish on the summit of the holy mountain (Moriah); that he would be a devil, and would rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem; that he would restore all the ceremonies of the law, and thus persuade the Jews to

¹ S. Hieron. *Com. in Daniel.*, cap. xi. tom. 5, p. 509.

² *Ibid.* p. 511.

³ S. Hieron. *Com. in posteriorem epist. ad Thess.*, cap. ii. tom. 9, p. 309.

⁴ S. Hieron. *Com. in Daniel.*, cap. xi. tom. 5, p. 508.

⁵ S. Hieron. *Com. in Esaiam*, cap. xvi. tom. 5, p. 73.

⁶ S. Hieron. *Com. in Zachariam*, cap. xi. tom. 6, p. 220.

receive him as the Christ; that this should be at the end of the world; that his parent would be Satan, and that he would trample upon the whole earth.

And with respect to the "time, times and a half," Jerome agrees with the rest: "Tempus, et tempora, et dimidium temporis, tres et semis annos interpretatur Porphyrius, quod et nos juxta Scripturarum sanctarum idioma non negamus." He then proceeds to justify this interpretation from the fact that the duration of King Nebuchadnezzar's insanity is stated in the same book to be "seven times, which no one doubts to have signified seven years."¹

From St. Athanasius.

It will not be without interest that we should hear the opinions of the famous Athanasius, given in answer to certain questions, as follows:—

QUÆSTIO CVII.

Quale signum tenere debet homo, ne seducatur et recipiat Antichristum, putans videlicet, ipsum esse Deum?

RESPONSIO.

Hoc ipsum, quod Dominus tradidit nobis, dicens: *Quod quemadmodum fulgur exit ab Orientali plaga mundi, et in Occidentem usque lucet, sic etiam filii hominis secundus erit adventus.* Docemur inde, quod omnis Christi sese nomine venditans, si non veniat ex improvise, nec in toto conspicuus, sed reperiatur tantum in una regione vel civitate, quod talis sine dubio sit Antichristus.

QUÆSTIO CVIII.

An vero ex Ægypto egreditur Antichristus, et quod signum in manu una, ut et oculo uno, præ se fert?

RESPONSIO.

Hæc omnia aniles sunt fabulæ. Antichristus enim nullum tale signum præ se fert: sed etiam ex Galilæa, unde Christus exiit, veniet, sicut ait Scriptura: *Catulus leonis Dan, et exiliet ex Basan:* quæ est Scythopolis.

¹ S. Hieron. *Com. in Daniel.*, tom. 5, p. 512, F.

In these answers, we see how Athanasius refers to the glory which shall mark the coming of our Lord, as a complete preservative against the danger of being deceived by Antichrist. He also adopted the same view, which appears to have been the prevalent one, namely, that Antichrist would be one of the Jewish race, and should assume the name of the true Messiah. In both of these the contrast is direct between his doctrine and that of our modern interpreters; for the Pope is a Gentile, and not a Jew. And he has never called himself the Christ, but only the Vicar of Christ. The following extracts will show this contrast yet more plainly : —

QUÆSTIO CIX.

Asserunt quidam, possibile non fore, ut Antichristus exsuscitet a mortuis hominem, etiamsi reliqua faciat omnia.

RESPONSIO.

Quod Apostolus de Antichristo dicit, eum sese exhibiturum in omnibus signis et virtutibus mendacii, liquet, quod etiam mortuum a se excitatum ostentabit, id autem non vere, sed tantum ex phantasia.¹

Antichristus transformata specie asserit, se Christum esse, ac de futura consummatione instituit loqui, quo audientes in errorem abducatur :² etc.

Here we see that Athanasius attributes to Antichrist the working of all miracles, even to the raising of the dead: but all these will be *lying* miracles — not real, but fictitious. It is certain, however, that the Pope has never claimed any such power. He has given credit to the miraculous powers of others, and yet has at no time pretended to exercise such powers himself.

We see also, in the last sentence quoted, that Antichrist, changing his appearance, will assert that he is Christ, and will talk of the future consummation predicted by the old prophets, by which he will deceive his hearers. But nothing like this can be found in the history of the Popes.

¹ S. Athanasii op. tom. 2, p. 373-74. Ed. 1686, Colonizæ.

² *Ibid.* tom. 1, p. 500, C.

The next of those ancient witnesses is Ambrose, the eminent Bishop of Milan, whose opinions will be sufficiently manifest from the following extracts : —

From St. Ambrose.

Fuit autem et Samson de Tribu Dan, et judicavit Israel viginti annis. Sed non hunc prophetia significat, at Antichristum qui futurus est ex Tribu Dan, sævus judex, et tyrannus immanis,¹ etc.

Nam et bestia illa Antichristus ex abyso adscendit, ut adversus Eliam atque Enoch atque Johannem, qui propter testimonium domini Jesu terris sunt reddit, præliaretur; ut legimus in Johannis Apocalypsi: cui datum est os loquendi magna, ut adversus Deum plena furoris convicia et sacrilegii personaret.²

Et ideo ait: *In nomine Patris veni, et non me suscepistis: si alius venerit in nomine suo, illum suscipietis*; significans Judæos in Antichristum credituros, qui in Christum credere noluerunt.³

This testimony is clear, that Antichrist would be a Jew of the tribe of Dan, a cruel and inhuman tyrant; that he would oppose Elias, Enoch, and John, who, as Ambrose supposed, would return to the earth and bear witness to Jesus; and that the Jews, who rejected Christ coming in the name of His Father, would receive Antichrist coming in his own name. But the Pope does not come in his own name; neither has he opposed Elias, Enoch, or St. John; nor has he ever been received by the Jews as their Messiah; nor does he claim to be of the tribe of Dan. On the contrary, he has never shown the Jews any favor, nor is there any portion of the Christian Church which the Jews hate as much as the Church of Rome.

We come next to the testimony of St. Augustine, whose authority amongst the Fathers is acknowledged to be of the highest estimation : —

From St. Augustine.

Peracto quippe judicio tunc esse desinet hoc cælum et hæc terra,

¹ S. Ambrosii op. tom. I, p. 523, A.

² *Ibid.* p. 930, C.

³ *Ibid.* p. 896, D.

quando incipiet esse cælum novum et terra nova. Mutatione namque rerum, non omni modo interitu, transibit hic mundus. Unde et Apostolus ait: *Præterit enim figura hujus mundi, volo vos sine sollicitudine esse.* Figura ergo præterit, non natura.¹

After quoting in full St. Paul's words in 2d Thess. ii., St. Augustine saith:—

Nulli dubium est, eum de Antichristo ista dixisse; diemque judicii (hunc enim appellat diem Domini) non esse venturum, nisi ille prior venerit, quem refugam vocat, utique a Domino Deo. Quod si de omnibus impiis meritò dici potest, quanto magis de isto? Sed in quo templo Dei sit sessurus, incertum est: utrum in illa ruina templi, quod a Salomone rege constructum est, an verò in Ecclesia.²

Antichristi tamen adversus Ecclesiam sævissimum regnum, licet exiguo spatio temporis sustinendum, donec Dei ultimo judicio regnum sancti accipiant sempiternum, qui vel dormitans hæc legit, dubitare non sinitur. Tempus quippe et tempora et dimidium temporis, annum unum esse, et duos, et dimidium, ac per hoc tres annos et semissem, etiam numero dierum posterius posito dilucescit, aliquando in Scripturis et mensium numero declaratur.³

The first of these extracts shows the judgment of St. Augustine on the new heaven and the new earth. He saith that the world will pass away, not by the *destruction* of all things, but by a *change*. Hence the Apostle saith that the *figure* of this world will pass away. Therefore the *form*, and not the *nature*, will disappear.

Next we find that Augustine connects the coming of Antichrist with the Day of Judgment. For the Apostle saith that the day of the Lord will not come until *he* shall first come whom he calls an Apostate from the Lord God. For if this name may be justly applied to all impious men, how much more to Antichrist? But in what temple of God he shall sit as God, whether in the ruins of the

¹ S. Augustini *De Civ. Dei*, lib. xx. cap. xiv.

² *Ibid.* cap. xix.

³ *Ibid.* cap. xxiii.

Temple erected by Solomon or in the Church, Augustine deemed to be uncertain.

Lastly this eminent Father is clear that the kingdom of Antichrist will be most cruel towards the Church, although it will be only *for a short period* before the final judgment of God shall establish the kingdom of the Saints forever. For he who reads, however drowsily, cannot doubt of this : — that the *time, times, and the dividing of time* signify, one year, two years, and a half, and therefore *three years and a half*, which is plain from the number of the months (forty-two), and even of the days (twelve hundred and sixty) elsewhere mentioned in the Scriptures.

I pass on next to the catechetical discourses of St. Cyril, the Bishop of Jerusalem, whose commentary on the subject of Antichrist is very copious, and highly interesting. It will occupy several pages ; but it will be found well deserving of the reader's attention, if he desires to have a large interpretation of the prophecies, as they were understood by the best minds in the purest ages of Primitive Christianity : —

From St. Cyril of Jerusalem.

. . . Cum verus Christus secundò venturus erit, simplicium, et circumcisorum præsertim, expectationem Adversarius in occasionem sumens, producet quemdam hominem magum, ac fallacis veneficiorum incantationumque perversæ artis peritissimum ; qui et Romani imperii dominationem usurpabit, et falso se Christum appellaturus est, et per hanc Christi appellationem Judæos qui Unctum [sive Messiam ac Christum] expectant, decipiet, Gentilesque magicis præstigiis ac dolis pertrahet.

XII. Veniet porro præfatus iste Antichristus, cum Romani imperii completa fuerint tempora, jamjamque mundi finis proximus erit. Decem simul Romanorum reges exsurgent, in diversis forte locis, uno tamen eodemque tempore regnantes. Post hos vero undecimus erit Antichristus, magicæ artis adminiculo Romanum imperium usurpans. Tres eorum qui ante se regnaverint, humiliabit, septem vero reliquos suæ ditioni subjectos habens. Ac primum quidem veluti eruditus ac prudens quispiam clementiam,

temperantiam, humanitatemque simulabit: atque Judæis per signa, falsaque ex magicis fraudibus prodigia, quasi ille expectatus Christus esset, deceptis; omnibus deinceps crudelitatis et sceleris inscribetur notis, ita ut omnes injustos et impios qui ipsum præcessere, improbitate superet: sanguinarium, præfractæ duritiæ, immisericordem et versipellem, cum adversus omnes, tum vero maxime contra nos Christianos, animum gerens. Postquam vero tres annos et menses sex duntaxat talia designaverit, ab secundo unigeniti Filii Dei domini et Salvatoris nostri Jesu, veri Christi, glorioso de cælis adventu abolebitur: qui Spiritu oris sui Antichristum interficiens, illum igni tradet sempiterno.

XIII. Hæc autem docemus, non comminiscentes, sed ex divinis quas legit Ecclesia Scripturis, et maxime ex recens lecta Danielis prophetia, edocti: sicut et Gabriel archangelus interpretatus est his verbis: *Quarta bestia, quartum erit regnum in terra, quod omnia regna supereminebit.* Hoc autem Romanum esse ecclesiastici auctores tradiderunt. Cum enim primum quod illustre fuerit, sit Assyriorum imperium: alterum, Medorum simul et Persarum; et tertium post hæc, Macedonum; quartum imperium est præsens Romanorum. Tum in consequentibus Gabriel interpretando ait: *Decem cornua ipsius, decem reges exsurgent; et post ipsos exsurret rex alter, qui omnes se anteriores malis superabit:* non solum illos decem dicit, sed et omnes quotquot præcessere. *Et tres reges humiliabit;* ex illis decem prioribus, ut planum est: ex illis vero decem tres humilians, prorsus ipse octavus regnabit. *Et verba, inquit, contra Altissimum loquetur:* blasphemus vir et legum contemtor, qui non a patribus regnum acceperit, sed magicis artibus principatum rapuerit.

XIV. Quis autem iste est, aut cujusmodi ad operationem pertinet? Interpretes esto, Paule. *Cujus est, inquit, adventus secundum operationem Satanae, in omni potestate et signis et prodigiis mendacii.* Hoc innuens, Satanam eo tamquam instrumento usurum, in propria persona per ipsum operantem. Gnarus enim nullam de cætero moram suo judicio fore, jam non per ministros suos ex more, sed per seipsum deinceps apertius bellum geret. *In omnibus vero signis et prodigiis mendacii.* Qui enim mendacii pater est, mendacii opera fictis speciebus ostentabit, ita ut plebes resuscitatum mortuum se videre putent, qui tamen non resuscitetur; et claudos ambulantes, et cæcos visum recipientes, cum nulla hujusmodi fiat sanatio.

XV. Rursumque ait: *Qui adversatur, et extollitur super omnem*

qui dicitur Deus aut numen : (supra omnem Deum : idola quippe odio habiturus est Antichristus.) Ita ut ipse in templo Dei sedeat. Quale autem templum ? eversum intelligit illud Judæorum. Absit enim, ut istud in quo sumus dicat. Cur autem hoc dicimus ? ne nobis ipsis gratificari videamur. Si enim ad Judæos tamquam Christus venturus est, et a Judæis adorari volet ; ut ipsos magis decipiat, templi studium maximum ostentabit ; suspicionem spargens se eum esse ex genere Davidis, qui templum a Salomone constructum reparaturus sit. Veniet autem Antichristus tunc, cum in templo Judæorum lapis super lapidem non manebit, juxta Salvatoris denunciationem. Quando enim vel vetustate collapsi, vel ædificationis prætextu dejecti, vel quæcumque ob aliam causam eversi fuerint lapides omnes ; non exterioris dico ambitus, sed interioris ædis ubi Cherubim erant : tunc veniet ille in omnibus signis et portentis mendacii ; adversus idola omnia se efferens : et initiis quidem humanitatem simulans, postea vero feritatem maxime adversum Sanctos Dei demonstrans. Dicit enim [Daniel] : Videbam, et cornu illud bellum gerebat cum Sanctis. Et rursus alio in loco : Erit tempus afflictionis : afflictio qualis non fuit ex quo gens exstitit super terram, usque ad tempus illud. Terribilis est fera, draco magnus hominibus insuperabilis, paratus ad devorandum : de quo tametsi plura ex divinis Scripturis dicenda habeamus, modum tamen tenentes his interim contenti erimus.

XVI. Idcirco adversarii hujus vim pernoscens Dominus, piis veniam concedit aïens : *Tunc qui in Judea erunt, fugiant in montes.* Si quis vero sibi firmitatis maximæ conscius sit, ut adversus Satanam repugnet, persistat (non enim robur et nervos Ecclesiæ desperatos habeo) ; et dicat : *Quis nos separabit a charitate Christi ?* etc. Verum qui timidi sumus, nos in tuto ponamus ; qui vero fiduciæ pleni, ad pugnam perstemus. *Erit enim tunc afflictio magna, qualis non fuit ab initio creaturæ usque ad hoc tempus, neque deinceps erit.* Attamen Deo sit gratia, qui afflictionis magnitudinem paucis diebus circumscripsit. Dicit enim : *Sed propter electos decurtabuntur dies illi.* Regnabit vero Antichristus tres annos et dimidium duntaxat. Quod non ex apocryphis dicimus, sed ex Daniele. Ait namque : *Et dabitur in manu ejus usque ad tempus, et tempora, et dimidium temporis.* Tempus est annus unus, in quo sensim augmentum capiet ejus adventus : tempora, vero, duo reliqui impietatis anni ; quæ in summam collecta annos tres conficiunt : et dimidium temporis, sunt sex menses.¹

¹ S. Cyril. Cat. XV. §§ 11 – 16, pp. 229–232.

In this long extract from the celebrated Cyril of Jerusalem, we find the following statements: —

When Christ is about to come the second time, the Adversary (Satan) will send forth a magician, most skillful in his perverse art, who shall usurp the dominion of the Roman Empire, and falsely call himself the Christ, deceiving the Jews by this pretense that he is their Messiah, and deluding the Gentiles by his magical wonders.

This Antichrist will come when the times of the Roman Empire are filled up, for then the end of the world will be nigh. Ten kings will rise up together in different places, reigning at the same time. The eleventh after these will be Antichrist, usurping the Roman Empire by his magical arts. Three of those who had reigned before him he will abase, and make the other seven subject to his government. At first he will appear to be erudite and prudent, clement and humane. As soon, however, as he shall have succeeded in deceiving the Jews by his magical arts into the persuasion that he is their Messiah, he will exceed in ferocious cruelty all that have lived upon the earth, raging especially against the Church. But after he has held his destructive reign during three years and six months, he shall be thrust down by the glorious advent of our Lord and Saviour, the only begotten Son of God, and the true Christ, descending from heaven, who will destroy Antichrist with the Spirit of His mouth, and cast him into everlasting fire.

Cyril then proceeds to prove his statement from the prophecy of Daniel, and passes on to the prediction of St. Paul. Here he maintains that the Apostle speaks of Satan using Antichrist as his instrument, and working in proper person through him. For knowing that there would be no further delay of his own judgment, he will not be satisfied to carry on his warfare by his servants as before, but will battle openly by himself. As he is the father of lies, he will exhibit all false signs and prodigies, so that the multitude shall think that the dead are brought to life

again, that the lame walk, and the blind see ; while the whole will be not real, but only a Satanical delusion.

Cyril proceeds to comment on the words of St. Paul, that Antichrist will "exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he as God shall sit in the temple of God." This our author understands as signifying that Antichrist will hold idolatry in abhorrence, doubtless because he could not otherwise maintain his authority with the Jews, nor concentrate their worship on himself as their Messiah and their Deity. He then discusses the question : *In what temple shall he be seated ?* Cyril, being the Archbishop of Jerusalem, delivered his admirable discourses in the magnificent church there, which was not a Jewish, but a Gentile church, erected by the Empress Helena long after the destruction of the old Temple by the Romans and the expulsion of the Jews. Therefore he saith : "God forbid that Antichrist should sit in the temple where we are now assembled. But if Antichrist shall come to the Jews, as if he were the Christ, and desires to be adored by them, he will show the greatest zeal for their Temple, in order the better to deceive them, spreading the idea around that he is the king who should come of the seed of David, and should restore the Temple which was built by Solomon. But Antichrist will come when one stone shall not be left upon another in that Temple, according to the denunciation of the Saviour, especially in the interior where the Cherubim were placed, though of the outer walls something may remain. And then, he will display all lying prodigies, and condemn all idols ; and though in the beginning he will pretend to mildness and humanity, yet afterwards he will rage against the Saints of God. For it is written that the little horn shall make war against the Saints, and that there should be a time of such affliction as was never known upon the earth, caused by that terrible and ferocious dragon, invincible by men, and ready to devour.

“The Lord, therefore, well knowing the power of the great adversary, grants this grace to the faithful, saying, ‘Then, let those who are in Judea, flee to the mountains.’ Yet if any are conscious of sufficient firmness to contend against Satan, let him remain — for I would not (saith Cyril) despair of the strength and resolution of the Church: and the faithful may say, ‘Who shall separate us from the love of Christ,’ etc. But thanks be to God, who puts a limit to the greatness of the affliction. Therefore the Lord saith: ‘For the elect’s sake, those days shall be shortened.’ Antichrist will reign for *three years and a half only*. And this we say, not from any Apocryphal writings, but from Daniel, who declares expressly, that the kingdom shall be given into his hand *until a time, times, and the dividing of time*. A *time* is one year, *times* are the two other years of impiety, and the *dividing of time* is half a year,” etc.

In this long extract from the famous work of Cyril, we have his concurrence with the other witnesses in all the important points of the question. Antichrist will come near the end of the present dispensation. He will be the special instrument of Satan, who will work in person through him. He will claim to be the Christ; and will deceive the Jews by this, by his denunciation of idolatry, and by demoniac art in producing false miracles. He will assume the right to divine worship, as God. He will claim his descent from David, as the Messiah. He will reestablish the Temple at Jerusalem, and sit therein as the Deity. He will rage against the saints, and cause the most unexampled extremes of suffering and tribulation. But his reign will be short, extending only to three years and six months, when the Lord shall destroy him by the brightness of His coming.

The next witness to the opinions which prevailed in the Primitive Church is Lactantius, an eloquent writer of the fourth century. His statements are as follows: —

From Lactantius.

. . . . Propinquate igitur hujus seculi termino, humanarum rerum statum commutari necesse est, et imperium in Asiam revertetur; ac rursus oriens dominabitur, atque occidens serviet. . . . Tunc discordiæ civiles in perpetuum serentur; nec ulla requies bellis exitiis erit, donec reges decem pariter existant, qui orbem terræ, non ad regendum, sed ad consumendum patiantur. Hi exercitibus in immensum coactis, et agrorum cultibus destitutis, quod est principium eversionis et cladis, disperdent omnia, et comminuent, et vorabunt. Tum repente adversus eos hostis potentissimus ab extremis finibus plagæ septentrionalis orietur; qui tribus ex numero deletis, qui tunc Asiam obtinebunt, assumetur in societatem a cæteris, ac princeps omnium constituetur. Hic insustentabili dominatione vexabit orbem; divina et humana miscebit; infanda dictu, et execrabilia molietur; nova consilia in pectore suo volutabit, ut proprium sibi constituat imperium; leges commutabit, suas sanciet; contaminabit, diripiet, spoliabit, occidet. Denique immutato nomine, atque imperii sede translata, confusio ac perturbatio humani generis consequetur.¹

Sed planius, quomodo id eveniat, exponam. Imminente jam temporum conclusione, propheta magnus mittetur a Deo, qui convertat homines ad Dei agnitionem, et accipiat potestatem mirabilia faciendi. Ubicunque non audierint eum homines, cludet cælum; et abstinebit imbres; et aquam convertet in sanguinem, et cruciabit illos siti, ac fame, et quicunque conabitur eum lædere, procedet ignis de ore ejus, atque comburet illum. His prodigiis, atque virtutibus, convertet multos ad Dei cultum; peractisque operibus ipsius, alter Rex orietur ex Syria malo spiritu genitus, eversor, ac perditor generis humani, qui reliquias illius prioris mali cum ipso simul debeat. Hic pugnabit adversus prophetam Dei; et vincet, et interficiet eum, et insepultum jacere patietur. Sed post diem tertium reviviscet; atque inspectantibus et mirantibus cunctis rapietur in cælum. Rex vero ille teterrimus erit quidem et ipse, sed mendaciorum, propheta; et seipsum constituet ac vocabit Deum; et se coli jubebit ut Dei filium: et dabitur ei potestas, ut faciat signa et prodigia; quibus visis irretiat homines, ut adorent eum. Jubebit ignem descendere de cælo, et solem a suis cursibus stare,

¹ Lactantii *Divinarum Institutionum*, lib. vii. §§ 15, 16, pp. 490-93.

et imaginem loqui, et fient hæc sub verbo ejus, quibus miraculis etiam sapientium plurimi allicientur ab eo. Tunc eruere templum Dei conabitur; et justum populum persequetur: et erit pressura, et contritio, qualis nunquam fuit a principio mundi. Quicumque crediderint, atque accesserint ei, signabuntur ab eo tanquam pecudes: qui autem recusaverint notam ejus, aut in montes fugient; aut, comprehensi, exquisitis cruciatibus necabuntur. Idem justos homines obvolveth libris prophetarum; atque ita cremabit, et dabitur ei desolare orbem terræ mensibus quadraginta duobus. Id erit tempus, quo justitia projicietur, et innocentia odio erit; quo mali bonos hostiliter prædabuntur; non lex, aut militiæ disciplina servabitur; non canos quisquam reverebitur, non officium pietatis agnoscet; non sexus aut infantiæ miserebitur. Confundentur omnia, et miscebuntur contra fas, contra jura naturæ. Ita quasi uno communique latrocinio, terra universa vastabitur. Cum hæc facta erunt, tum justi et sectatores veritatis segregabunt se a malis, et fugient in solitudines. Quo audito, impius rex inflammatus ira veniet cum exercitu magno, et admotis omnibus copiis circumdabit montem in quo justi morabuntur, ut eos comprehendat. Illi vero, ubi se clausos undique atque obsessos viderint, exclamabunt ad Deum voce magna, et auxilium cœleste implorabunt; et exaudiet eos Deus; et emittet regem magnum de cœlo, qui eos eripiat, ac liberet, omnesque impios ferro ignique disperdat.

. . . . Tunc aperietur cœlum medium intempesta et tenebrosa nocte: ut in orbe toto lumen descendentis Dei tanquam fulgur appareat. . . . Hic est enim liberator, et judex, et ultor, et rex, et Deus, quem nos Christum vocamus; qui priusquam descendat, hoc signum dabit. Cadet repente gladius e cœlo; ut sciant justi ducem sanctæ militiæ descensurum; et descendet comitantibus angelis in medium terræ; et antecedit eum flamma inextinguibilis, et virtus angelorum tradet in manus justorum multitudinem illam quæ montem circumsederit; et concidetur ab hora tertia usque ad vesperum; et flueth sanguis more torrentis; deletisque omnibus copiis, impius solus effugiet; et peribit ab eo virtus sua. Hic est autem, qui appellatur Antichristus; sed seipse Christum mentietur; et contra verum dimicabit; et victus effugiet; et bellum sæpe renovabit; et sæpe vincetur; donec quarto prælio confectis omnibus impiis, debellatus, et captus, tandem scelerum suorum luat pœnas. Sed et cæteri principes ac tyranni, qui contriverunt orbem, simul cum eo vincti adducentur ad regem; et increpabit

eos, et coarguet; et exprobrabit his facinora ipsorum; et damnabit eos, ac meritis cruciatibus tradet.¹

The substance of the foregoing extracts is this: That Lactantius places the events connected with Antichrist at the time when the end of this dispensation draws near. The condition of human affairs will then be changed. The seat of empire will be restored to Asia, and again the East will have the dominion, and the West will be in subjection. Civil discords will prevail, and there will be no rest from destructive wars. Ten kings will reign, who shall consume rather than govern the world. A powerful enemy will suddenly arise who shall destroy three, and become the Prince over the others. He will oppress the earth with intolerable tyranny, spreading wickedness, contamination, and misery in every quarter. God will send forth a great prophet who shall convert men to the truth, by the miracles which he shall have power to perform. But another king shall arise in Syria, the offspring of Satan, the destroyer of the human race, who shall coöperate with the first in the work of evil. He shall slay the prophet, and leave his body unburied; and after three days the prophet shall rise again, and be taken up into heaven. This demoniacal king will also be a prophet, but only of lies; and he will call himself God, and will command men to worship him as the Son of God; and power will be given to him to do wonders and prodigies, which will induce the beholders to adore him. For he shall order fire to descend from heaven, and the sun to stand still, and an image to speak, and it shall be done at his word; by which miracles many even of the wise shall be enticed by him. Then he will endeavor to build up the Temple of God, and he will persecute the righteous people, and there will be such oppression and affliction as never were since the beginning of the world.

Those who believe in him shall be marked like cattle;

¹ Lactantii *Div. Instit.*, lib. vii. §§ 17-19, pp. 494-99.

and those who refuse to acknowledge him shall either flee to the mountains, or be killed with exquisite torments, and it will be given to him to desolate the world for *forty and two months* (three years and a half). This will be the time when justice shall be cast out, and innocence will be hated ; when the wicked shall make a prey of the good, neither law nor military discipline will be observed, no reverence will be shown to the aged, no office of piety will be acknowledged, no pity will be shown to women or infants ; all things will be thrown into confusion, against right, and even against the laws of nature. When these atrocities shall come to pass, the just and the followers of truth will withdraw themselves from the wicked, and will flee into the wilderness. And the impious king, inflamed with rage, will come with a great army, and surround the mountain where they will have sought refuge. But they, finding themselves besieged on every side, will cry to God with a loud voice, imploring help from heaven. And God will hear them, and will send the great King, who will deliver them, and disperse the wicked host with fire and sword.

. . . . Then will heaven open, and the glory of the descending God will appear like lightning in all the world. . . . For he is the Deliverer, the Judge, and the Avenger, and the King, and God, whom we call Christ. Suddenly the sword will fall from heaven, and the just will recognize the Leader of the Holy Army, who will descend with the angelic host in the midst of the earth ; while flames of fire shall go before him, and the angels will deliver into the hands of the just the multitude who surround the mountain, and a torrent of blood will flow ; and, all his army being destroyed, the Wicked One will escape alone. This is he who is called the *Antichrist*, who will war against the true Christ, and being conquered will fly, until, in the fourth battle, all his forces being slain, he will be taken, and with all the princes and tyrants who aided him, will be condemned, and delivered to the torments which they have deserved.

The reader will see, in these statements of Lactantius, a substantial agreement with the rest. And while, in some of his views, he is less precise, and his description is more loose and rhetorical, yet we recognize without difficulty the main features of the interpretation current in his day.

Our next witness is St. Isidore, the Bishop of Hispala, or Seville, and greatly esteemed for erudition. The following extracts will show his opinions fairly : —

From St. Isidore of Seville.

Antichristus appellatur, quod contra Christum venturus est. . . . Christum enim se mentietur dum venerit, et contra eum dimicabit, et adversabitur sacramentis Christi, ut veritatis ejus evangelium solvat. Nam et templum Hierosolymis reparare, et omnes veteris legis ceremonias restaurare, tentabit.¹

Dum in Martyres Diabolus jam exercuerit crudelitatem magnam etiam ligatus, crudelior erit tamen Antichristi temporibus, quando etiam erit solvendus. . . .

Quanto propinquius finem mundi Diabolus videt, tanto crudelius persecutiones exercet: ut quia se continuo damnandum conspicit, socios sibi multiplicet, cum quibus gehennæ ignibus addicatur.

Quanto brevius tempus videt sibi restare Diabolus, ut damnetur: tanto in magna persecutionis ira movetur, divina justitia permitte: ut glorificentur electi, sordidentur iniqui, et ut Diabolo durior crescat damnationis sententia.²

Tempus, juxta Hebræos, integer annus est, secundum illud in Daniele: *Tempus, et tempora, et dimidium*. Per *tempus*, annum significat, per *tempora* duos, et per *dimidium*, menses sex.³

Isidore here states that Antichrist is so called because he will oppose Christ. He will falsely declare himself to be the Messiah, and will make war against the Saviour and be hostile to the Sacraments of the Church, that he may break down the Gospel of truth. With this view he will

¹ S. Isidori Hispal. *Originum*, lib. viii. cap. xi. p. 70, A. Edit. Coloniae, 1617.

² *Ibid.* *Sententiarum*, lib. iii. cap. xxviii. p. 424, G.

³ *Ibid.* *De Natura Rerum*, cap. vii. p. 248, H.

set himself to repair the Temple of Jerusalem, and to restore all the ceremonies of the Old Law.

Again, saith this writer : " Since the devil has already exercised such great cruelty against the martyrs, although bound, how much more cruel will he be in the times of Antichrist when he will be unloosed ?

" The nearer the devil sees the end of the world to be, the more cruel will be his persecution, for as he beholds his own condemnation continually, he will multiply companions to himself, with whom he may share the flames of Gehenna."

Again, saith Isidore : " The shorter the time which Satan knows to be remaining before his condemnation, the greater will be the wrath which stimulates his persecution ; divine justice permitting it, that the elect may be glorified, that the wicked may be defiled, and that the sentence of the final judgment upon the devil may be more severe."

And in the last paragraph, Isidore gives his plain interpretation of the period during which the reign of Antichrist shall continue. " A time," saith he, " is a single year, according to what we read in Daniel : A time, times and an half. By a *time*, he signifies a year ; by *times*, two years ; and by the *half*, six months."

We turn next to the celebrated Chrysostom, who thus speaks of the reign of Antichrist :—

From St. Chrysostom.

Tunc verè talis erit tribulatio, qualis nunquam fuit. Tunc dicent homines, Aperiat se terra, et glutiat nos. Usque tunc enim omnis ira quæ fit a Deo, ideo fit, ut fideles quidem tentet, infideles autem emendet : cum autem Antichristus venerit, talis veniet ira, ut et infideles omnino pereant, et fideles plenius coronentur. Cum enim multi Christianorum credentes Antichristo, signum nominis ejus in manu dextera, et in fronte susceperint ; tunc exibunt angeli cum igneis curribus volantes per aëra : et invisibili manu signabunt omnes fideles, in quibus tamen inventum non fuerit signum Antichristi. Ex illo jam plagæ, quæ venturæ

sunt super terram, in quibus et finiendus est mundus, jam non tangent fideles qui signati sunt, sed illos percutient super quos Antichristi inventum fuerit signum. Erit enim tribulatio magna, qualis nunquam fuit.¹

Here St. Chrysostom saith that in the times of Antichrist there will be such tribulation as was never known before. Men shall wish that the earth might open and swallow them. . . . When Antichrist shall come, his fury shall be so controlled that all the unfaithful shall perish, and the faithful be more fully exalted. Many professing Christians will believe in him, and receive his mark in their right hand and in the forehead. And the angels will go forth in chariots of fire through the air, and with an invisible hand will sign all the faithful in whom the mark of Antichrist is not found. Then will come the plagues upon the earth, during which the *world will come to an end*: but they will not touch the faithful; and those only shall perish on whom the mark of Antichrist appears.

With reference to the "falling away," of which St. Paul speaks in 2 Thes. ii., St. Chrysostom saith: —

Quid est quod defectionem hic vocat? Antichristum ipsum vocat defectionem, tanquam plurimos perditurum et abducturum. . . . Et hominem peccati illum vocat. Innumera quippe mala perpetrabit. . . . Filium autem perditionis dicit, propterea quod et ipse perdetur. Quis vero is est? An Satanas? Nequaquam: Sed homo quispiam omnem Satanæ energiam adeptus. Est enim homo, qui extolletur super omnem qui dicitur Deus aut Numen. . . . Jubebitque seipsum pro Deo coli ac venerari, et in templum Dei collocari, non Hierosolymitanum solum, sed et in ecclesias. Ostentans, inquit, seipsum esse Deum. Non dixit, Dicens seipsum esse Deum; sed ostentare tentans. Magnifica siquidem opera faciet, et signa patrabit admiranda.²

The substance of the foregoing extract is as follows: —

¹ S. Chrysostomi op. Latin., tom. 2, p. 958, Homil. xlix. Edit. Paris, 1570.

² *Ibid.* tom. 4, p. 1265, B, C, *Comment. in 2 Thess.*

What is it, saith St. Chrysostom, that the Apostle calls "a falling away?" He applies it to Antichrist himself, because many will be drawn away and perish through him. He also calls him the "Man of Sin," for he will perpetrate innumerable evils. He is likewise the "Son of Perdition," because he will go into perdition. But who is he? Satan? By no means; but he is a certain man having the energy of Satan. For he it is who shall exalt himself above every god, and be called God and Deity. . . . And he will command that he shall be worshipped and adored, and be seated not only in the Temple of Jerusalem, but also in the churches, showing himself that he is God. The Apostle does not say *calling himself*, but trying to *show himself*, God. For he will perform marvelous works, and exhibit signs that will be wonderful."

The period of Antichrist's reign is plainly stated by Chrysostom to be *three years and a half*:—

Quoniam autem tribus annis et sex mensibus protendendum est Antichristi regnum, multæ Scripturæ significant.¹

The last witness from the earlier writers of the Church, which I shall quote, is Gregory the Great, the Bishop of Rome in the sixth century, before the rise of Popery:—

From St. Gregory the Great.

Qui [Antichristus] veniens, diem Sabbatum atque Dominicum ab omni faciet opere custodiri. Quia enim mori se et resurgere simulat, haberi in veneratione vult diem Dominicum: et quia judaizare populum compellit, ut exteriorem ritum Legis revocet, et sibi Judæorum perfidiam subdat, coli vult Sabbatum.²

Caput quippe iniquorum diabolus est. Ipse quippe in ultimis temporibus illud vas perditionis ingressus, Antichristus vocabitur.³

Nam sicut incarnata Veritas in prædicatione sua pauperes idiotas et simplices elegit: sic e contrario damnatus ille homo, quem in

¹ S. Chrysost. op. Latin., tom. 2, Homil. xlix. p. 951, D.

² S. Gregor. op. tom. 2, p. 1213, B. Epist. lib. xiii. i. Edit. Paris, 1705.

³ S. Greg. Mag. tom 1, p. 445, B. *Moralium*, lib. xiv. 25.

fine mundi apostata angelus assumet, ad prædicandam falsitatem suam, astutos ac duplices, atque hujus mundi scientiam habentes, electurus est.¹

Nonnulli enim de tribu Dan venire Antichristum ferunt. . . . De quo et per Prophetam dicitur: *A Dan est fremitus equorum ejus* (Jer. viii. 16). Qui non solum coluber, sed etiam cerastes vocatur. *Képara* enim Græcè *cornua* Latinè dicuntur; serpensque hic cornutus esse perhibetur, per quem dignè Antichristi adventus asseritur: quia contra fidelium vitam cum morsu pestiferæ prædicationis, armatur etiam cornibus potestatis.²

Unde bene eundem Antichristum Psalmista descripsit, dicens: *Sub lingua ejus labor et dolor, sedet in insidiis cum divitibus in occultis*. Propter enim perversa dogmata sub lingua ejus, labor et dolor est; propter miraculorum verò speciem sedet in insidiis; propter secularis autem potestatis gloriam, cum divitibus in occultis. Quia enim simul et miraculorum fraude et terrena potestate utitur, et in occultis et cum divitibus sedere perhibetur.³

Antichristi tempore ab eis Gentibus quæ in infidelitate remanserint, plebs conversa Judæorum duris persecutionibus angustatur. Unde scriptum est: *Atrium autem quod est extra templum, ejice foras, et ne metiaris illud, quoniam datum est Gentibus, et civitatem sanctam calcabunt mensibus quadraginta duobus*. . . . Quia in extremis, cum Judæa crediderit, gravissimas Antichristi tempore persecutiones sentit, ita ut prædicationes ejus ministri iniquitatis non recipiant, sed resistendo has vinculis dolorum premantur. Erunt etenim tunc multi ex Judæis infidelibus, qui eosdem ipsos qui ex Judæis crediderint, persequentur.⁴

Sicut enim cedrus arbusta cetera in altum crescendo deserit, ita tunc Antichristus mundi gloriam temporaliter obtinens, mensuras hominum et honoris culmine et signorum potestate transcendet. Spiritus quippe in illo est, qui in sublimibus conditus, potentiam naturæ suæ non perdidit vel dejectus. . . . Quem quamvis sævitia ad crudelitatem dilatet, superna tamen misericordia dierum brevitate coangustat. Hinc enim Veritas per semetipsam dicit: *Erit tunc tribulatio magna, qualis non fuit ab initio mundi usque modo, neque fiet*. Hinc rursum ait: *Nisi breviati fuissent dies illi,*

¹ S. Greg. Mag. *Moralium*, lib. xiii. 13, p. 422, B.

² *Ibid.* lib. xxxi. 43, tom. 1, p. 1015, D, E.

³ *Ibid.* lib. xxxiii. 48, p. 1105, A.

⁴ *Ibid.* In *Ezech.*, lib. i., Hom. xii. 6, 7; op. tom. 1, p. 1295, A, B.

non fieret salva omnis caro. Quia enim et superbos nos et infirmos Dominus conspicit, dies quos singulariter malos intulit, misericorditer breviatos dicit : profectò et ut superbiam terreat de adversitate temporis, et infirmitatem refoveat de brevitate dierum.¹

In the first of these seven extracts, Gregory saith that when Antichrist comes, he will enforce the keeping of the Jewish Sabbath as well as the Lord's day. For as he will pretend to die and rise again, he will have the Lord's day venerated ; and as he will compel the people to Judaize, that he may call back the outward rites of the Law and subdue to himself the perfidy of the Jews, he will have their Sabbath to be honored also.

In the second and third extracts Gregory proceeds to say : " The head of all the wicked is the devil. And when, in the last times, he shall enter into that vessel of perdition, he will be called Antichrist. And as the Incarnate Truth chose unlearned and simple men to preach His Gospel, so, on the contrary, that accursed man, whose person will be assumed by the apostate angel at the end of the world, will appoint to preach his falsehood men of subtle craftiness, skilled in all the science of this world."

The fourth extract reads as follows : " It is said by some that Antichrist will come from the tribe of Dan, . . . relying on that passage in the prophet: *From Dan is the neighing of his horses.*² And he is called not only a serpent, but a horned serpent (*Cerastes*). And by this is justly asserted the coming of Antichrist, because he will not only assail the life of the faithful by the venomous biting of his pestiferous preaching, but he will also be armed with the horns of power."

Gregory presents a further commentary in the fifth extract, namely : " The Psalmist well describes Antichrist in saying, ' His tongue is labor and sorrow. He sits in

¹ S. Greg. *Moral.*, lib. xxxii. 22, 23 ; op. tom. i, p. 1059, A, C.

² In our authorized version, this text reads : " The snorting of his horses was heard from Dan." Jer. viii. 16.

snares, and with the rich in secret places.' For labor and sorrow proceed from the perverse dogmata of his tongue. By reason of his apparent miracles he is said to be seated in snares. And by the glory of secular power, he is with the rich in secret places. For he uses both the fraud of pretended miracles, and the force of earthly power; and in secret places and with the rich he sits in honor."

The last two extracts read thus: "In the time of Antichrist, the converted people of the Jews will be grievously persecuted by the infidel Gentiles. Whence it is written: '*The court which is without the temple do thou leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.*'¹ For at the end, when Judea shall believe, it will suffer the heaviest persecutions in the time of Antichrist, because they [the converted Jews] will not receive the preaching of his ministers of iniquity, and in their resistance they will be pressed with the chains of sufferings. . . . But there will be many unbelieving Jews, who will also persecute their believing brethren."

Gregory furnishes us with another statement in the last of our extracts, which is as follows: "As the cedar, growing aloft, deserts the other trees, even so will Antichrist, obtaining for a while the glory of this world, transcend the measure of men in the height of honor, and the power of his pretended miracles. For in him is that Spirit, who, being once among the highest, does not lose the power of his nature, though cast down. . . . But while he dilates in his rage and cruelty, the divine mercy will restrain him. For the Truth itself declares: '*Then will be great tribulation, such as never was since the beginning of the world unto this time.*' And again he saith: '*Unless those days be shortened, no flesh should be saved.*' For because the Lord beholds us proud, but weak, He saith that those days which He marked as so eminently evil, should be

¹ Rev. xi. 2.

mercifully shortened, in order that while He should subdue our pride by the suffering of the time, He might comfort our weakness by its brevity."

These quotations from the early Christian writers are sufficient to show the interpretation which prevailed in the Primitive Church; and I shall present some remarks upon their authority in the ensuing chapter.

Tenth Chapter.

The Testimony of the Fathers.

THE reader has now before him the opinions of ten ancient writers, representing all the then known continents in which Christianity had gained its establishment: Irenæus in Lyons, Jerome in Bethlehem, Athanasius in Alexandria, Ambrose in Milan, Augustine in Hippo, Cyril in Jerusalem, Lactantius in Nicomedia, Isidore in Seville, Chrysostom in Constantinople, and Gregory in Rome. The Church is thus set forth in Europe, Asia, and Africa, not by obscure and ordinary minds, but by eight men of the greatest authority, who were bishops and archbishops, — the other two, Jerome and Lactantius, being presbyters held in the highest esteem: while all of them were distinguished by the veneration with which their works were preserved, and handed down in reputation and honor, from age to age, as the most reliable witnesses to primitive Catholic doctrine. For they lived in those times when the Church was ONE, before the usurpation of the Papacy had driven away the East from the West; or the subtlety of Satan, acting on the superstition of the human heart, had engrafted new and false dogmas upon the pure faith of the Gospel.

The rule of authority among these writers was well expressed by Tertullian, where he saith: "That which is first is true." The oldest Fathers lived nearest to the Apostles, and therefore they were more likely to retain the sense of the Apostles in their interpretations of the Scriptures. The

same rule is the established maxim of the courts ; for the earliest judgments on the construction of law are always esteemed most highly, on the reasonable ground that the judges were in a better condition to apprehend the meaning of the legislature.

According to this rule, Irenæus, the eminent martyr and Bishop of Lyons, claims the first place in our esteem, for he flourished within seventy years from the death of the Apostle John, and had a far superior opportunity of knowing the true sense of the book of Revelation.

Of all these witnesses, Jerome is the only one who gives the name of Babylon to Rome. And in this he was probably influenced by personal feeling. He had been the secretary of the Bishop of Rome, Damasus, for a considerable time, when he became enamored of the new institution of Monasticism, which had been successfully established in Palestine. His own tastes and habits were all inclined to asceticism ; and as he found that his favorite system was denounced and ridiculed at Rome, he was naturally led to regard with strong disgust the prevailing luxury which formed so total a contrast to the simple life and labor of his monastic brethren. There are passages in his letters in which he inveighs with vehement eloquence against the fashions of Christians in the imperial city, urging his friends to flee from it, and describing, in glowing language, the piety and order of Monachism. And he set the example by throwing up his office as the secretary of the Bishop, after three years, and betaking himself, with a company of proselytes, to the Holy Land, where he died in A. D. 422, at an advanced age, after he had long been the superior of a monastery in Bethlehem.

Yet St. Jerome agrees with the rest in his interpretation concerning the great Antichrist of Scripture. And the whole ten witnesses concur generally in the statement, that Antichrist will be an individual man ; an incarnation of Satan, or his immediate offspring ; that he will be of the

Jewish race ; that he will appear at the close of the present dispensation ; that his reign will be limited to three years and a half, or forty-two months ; that he will seat himself as God in the Temple at Jerusalem ; that he will ingratiate himself with the unbelieving Jews by restoring the old law ; that he will perform miraculous works in appearance ; and that, when his power is established, he will rage in fury against Christ and the Church, and be the author of the most terrible misery and tribulation, until he is destroyed by the glorious advent of the Divine Redeemer.

This, in the main, is the statement of those primitive writers. And therefore it is indisputable that they stand entirely opposed to our modern interpreters, who have labored so ingeniously to make Antichrist correspond to the Pope of Rome. But here we must ask, Who were the best qualified to understand the prophecies ? Those eminent Fathers who lived nearest to the Apostolic times, and searched the Scriptures without any interest or prejudice to warp their judgment ? Or those men of modern days, doubtless equally honest and sincere, but who formed their opinions under the powerful bias produced by the struggles of the Reformation, when there was so strong an inducement to associate the domineering and persecuting spirit of Popery with the predictions concerning the Man of Sin and the Son of Perdition ?

Assuredly it ought not to be regarded as a matter of wonder or reproach, that the odious name of Antichrist should have been attached to the Roman Pontiff, at such a time and under such peculiar circumstances. For we know that from a very early period of the Church, this name was liberally applied to all the teachers of false doctrine. Thus the famous Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, and a martyr about the middle of the third century, at the close of the Third Council of Carthage, and with the concurrence of eighty-seven bishops, uses the following language : "I have fully expressed my sentence in the letter written to

my colleague Jubianus that those who, according to the evangelical and Apostolical testimony, are called adversaries of Christ and antichrists, when they come to the Church, are to be baptized by the only baptism of the Church, that they may become friends instead of being enemies, and Christians instead of being antichrists.”¹

This specimen may suffice as an example of the early practice to brand all heretics with the name of Antichrist. And it may be justified by the declaration of the Apostle John, where he saith : “ Little children, it is the last time : and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists ; whereby we know that it is the last time.”² Yet in the 22d verse of the same chapter, St. John saith : “ *He is Antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.* Whoso denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.” Our translators have here unfortunately left out the definite article. “ He is *the* Antichrist,” would have been a more correct version.

Now it is very certain that there were many heresies in the early centuries of the Church, which did not correspond with this definition, to say nothing of the heresy about the resurrection mentioned by St. Paul, or of the Gnostic heresies which St. John found so active. We have the Pelagian heresy, which consisted in maintaining that men could arrive at repentance and faith by the use of their natural powers, without the prævenient grace of the Holy Spirit ; while, notwithstanding this serious error, the Pelagians were perfectly orthodox in the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement, and could

¹ Meam sententiam plenissime exprimit epistola quæ ad Jubaianum collegam nostram scripta est ; hæreticos secundum evangelicam et Apostolicam contestationem adversarios Christi et Antichristos appellatos, quando ad Ecclesiam venerint, unico Ecclesiæ baptismo baptizandos esse, ut possint fieri de adversariis amici, et de Antichristis Christiani. — S. Cypriani Op., Ed. Paris., 1649, p. 364 : *Sentent. Episc. Concil. Carthag.*

² 1 St. John ii. 18.

not be accused of denying the Father and the Son with any propriety. The heresies imputed to the writings of the famous Origen, also, amounted to no more than his notions about the preëxistence of souls, and the possibility that Satan and the rebel angels might be saved at the last, while his belief in all the Articles of the Creed was unimpeachable. And there are many other heresies in the list of *eighty-eight* given by St. Augustine, to which the same distinction is applicable.

We must, therefore, understand St. John, in my humble judgment, as referring to heresies in the largest sense, where he speaks of there being already "many antichrists;" while his definition that "He is *the* Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son," should be applied to the GREAT ANTICHRIST — the "man of sin" and "son of perdition," who should indeed deny the Father and the Son by exalting himself "above every god," sitting "in the temple of God, and showing himself that he is God:" — an act of bold and amazing wickedness, of which none but an incarnate demon could be supposed capable.

The Reformers in Germany are thus seen to have had good authority for applying the term Antichrist to heretics in general. And as they were perfectly persuaded that the corrupt doctrines of Popery, united as they were with the fiercest and most cruel persecution, were more dangerous than any other existing form of error, they were easily led to confound the less with the greater, in their zeal for the truth of the Gospel. Hence they strained the language of the prophets to accommodate the temper of the times, and in their hatred of Papal falsehood and despotism, departed not only from the literal sense of Scripture, but from the old interpretation of the Fathers, in order to fasten on the Roman Pontiff the name of Antichrist, in its most odious sense. And since their day, as their views of the question were highly acceptable to every Protestant community, and none were disposed to contradict them, it was natural

that subsequent authors, inheriting their antipathy to Popery, should continue to pursue the same track, in despite of its inconsistency with the letter of the Word, and the unanimous comments of the most eminent writers in the purest ages of Christian antiquity.

But while we may and ought to make allowance for this mistake on the part of many good and sincere men, who, in our Mother Church of England, and in our own, have been misled into the modern interpretation, it is certainly a fact for which we should be devoutly thankful, that our standards of doctrine are perfectly free from any inculcation of the error. Our controversy with Rome involves enough, and more than enough, to justify the British Reformation, without including a charge which cannot be fairly proved; and the cause of truth can gain nothing by persevering in the maintenance of an untenable accusation.

Eleventh Chapter.

Present Position of the Church.

THE task proposed is now accomplished ; but before I close my humble treatise, it may be well to add a few chapters on the position of the Church and the state of the religious world, in the much boasted intelligence of the nineteenth century.

A little more than three hundred years have passed away since the Reformation, in several parts of Europe, broke down the despotism and false doctrines of Popery, and brought back the written Word of God to be the standard of the faith, instead of the delusive guidance of tradition.

That great Reformation succeeded first in Germany, and then extended into France, Switzerland, Denmark, Sweden, and Holland, until it became finally established in England and Scotland, with a partial influence on Ireland. Its great leaders on the Continent were Luther, Calvin, and Zuinglius. The Baptists made a beginning under the name of Anabaptists, and the Socinians raised their standard in Poland ; but Luther and Calvin especially, held the main influence.

All of these, however, having no bishops among them, cast aside, of necessity, the primitive and Apostolic system of government ; and along with that, introduced the novel plan of extemporaneous worship, instead of the original mode modeled after the Liturgy of the Jewish Synagogue, which dated back as far as the Babylonish Captivity, and

had then been arranged by the prophet Ezra. This liturgical worship was sanctioned by our Lord and His Apostles. And hence it presented the pattern on which the churches of Christ grew into their established order. Thus we read the direction of St. Paul to Timothy, the first Bishop of Ephesus: "Hold fast," saith the great Apostle, "the *form of sound words*, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."¹ And in effect, we know that every Church had its "form of sound words," or its Liturgy, as plainly appeared when their various forms were published in the fifth century.

But it was only in England that the Reformation, by the special favor of God, was enabled to perform its work in accordance with the primitive and Apostolic system. The Episcopal government established by the inspired Apostles, and along with it the original form of liturgical worship, was preserved faithfully, cleansed from every stain of Papal superstition, and conformed to the true plan which had the sanction of divine wisdom; while the Bible, divided into sections, was a regular part of the instructions in all the assemblies of the Church, and was firmly established as the *standard of faith*, according to the Fathers, the Councils, and the Creeds, of the first four centuries.

And now, what do we behold, after the experience of these three hundred years? Those branches of the Protestant Reformation which had lost the primitive guards of truth in government and worship, have become divided and subdivided into more than a hundred sects.² In our own days we have seen many new varieties springing up amongst Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and Congregationalists. These last have been broken into the three branches of the Orthodox, the Unitarians, and the Univer-

¹ 2 Tim. i. 13.

² Mr. De Bow, in the preface to the Supplement of the U. S. Census of 1850, states that he had received statistical returns from more than 100 denominations.

salists. The Christians, as they call themselves by eminence, unite the Unitarian with the Baptist plan. The Second Advent men, who are so fond of calculating the precise time of the Saviour's coming (though He Himself declared that the appointed season was not known by the angels of God, but by the Father only), form another subdivision of very modern growth. And a new sect, founded upon the notion that the wicked will not be raised to judgment at the last day, but be entirely annihilated, has come into being within a few years, with a reasonable promise of popularity. While all of them have been more or less divided again by the strife of Abolitionism, seduced into the attractive but dangerous mistake of placing politics as a guard to stand sentinel over religion.

In addition to all this, we have seen Mormonism rise up, and occupy a Territory, which may soon become a State. And Spiritualism, which claims to do far more miracles than Popery, has swept over the land, and been embraced by a deluded multitude who had been, for the most part, entirely indifferent to the call of the Gospel. Above them all, the demon of infidelity has been, and is, most successful, keeping the majority of the men in bondage to their business, their passions, their pleasures, or their ambition, without any care or thought of eternity, turning the Lord's day into a season of worldly amusement, and leaving religion to the zeal and devotion of the women, — as if the stronger sex, who call themselves "the lords of the creation," had no souls to be saved!

Amidst all this sectarian division and confusion; amidst the delusions of Spiritualism and infidelity; amidst the speculations of philosophic Pantheism, and a constant warfare kept up against the Word of God: we see the Church of Rome steadily advancing in numbers and in influence throughout every land where the principles of the Reformation were supposed to have abolished her forever. Her claims to universal dominion are still the same, but her

power to enforce them has passed away; and mankind at large, no longer feeling the yoke or seeing her deeds of persecution, have either forgotten the facts of history, though they were written in blood, or imagine that they are not chargeable to her as a Church, but were only the results of political necessity. And thus she grows more and more into favor, with her cardinal, archbishop, and bishops in England itself; with her priests, monasteries, and nunneries reëstablished where they were all overthrown three hundred years ago; with an increasing body of the laity, noble and simple, to support her; and with all her fascinations of outward pomp and imposing ceremonial.

And so it is in these United States. The Church of Rome is, beyond dispute, the strongest, the most imposing and increasing, religious body in the land: having under her control the largest share in training the rising generation; erecting thus far the only spacious and splendid cathedrals; commanding the services of the most devoted classes of men and women; displaying the utmost attractiveness in her public ritual; and skillfully governed by the guidance of bishops and priests, who unite great talents with consummate prudence and sagacity, and possess a thorough knowledge of human nature.

These are the facts. Let the thoughtful reader ponder them, and ask himself, What is the reason of this vast difference between the steadfast growth and comparative unity of the Church of Rome, and the fragmentary divisions, the multiplied and still multiplying sects, of Protestant Christianity?

The reason, I apprehend, is to be found in this: namely, that the Church of Rome, notwithstanding her corrupt innovations in faith, in government, and in worship, has retained those original principles of law and order which were given at first to the Church of God in ancient Israel, and were afterwards embodied in the Church of Christ, under the inspired dictation of the Apostles. The govern-

ment which the Pope claims over the whole Church, as the sole vicar of the Divine Redeemer, is indeed a gross imposition, to which no intelligent mind can conscientiously submit. But the *practical administration* of Rome is still vested in her bishops, according to the Apostolic system. So her worship has been defiled by the introduction of prayers to the Virgin and the saints: but still the main body of her Liturgy is derived from the ancient sources. Her ritual is substantially taken from that of the Old Testament, where the Almighty Himself commanded the seven-branched candlestick, the incense, the holy oil, and the priestly garments which are expressly said to be for "glory and for beauty." In the Psalms we are exhorted to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;" and surely, when the Deity condescended to make these ritual observances a standing part of His public service, it seems a strange way of reverencing the Word of God to abuse them, merely because they have been retained in the Church of Rome.

Now the only *reformed* Church in Great Britain and America whose system is in accordance with these great features of Scriptural and Apostolic Catholicity is the Church of England, and her offspring — the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States. And therefore it is the only Church which is both Catholic and Protestant; Catholic in all that belonged to the Primitive Church, when the term Catholic truly described its character; and Protestant in respect to all the dangerous and unauthorized innovations which the Church of Rome unhappily brought in, during the dark ages of ignorance and superstition. It is the only reformed Church which retains the Apostolic government, in union with the ancient worship, and takes the early Fathers, bishops, and martyrs as the safest interpreters of the Word of God. And it is the only reformed Church which adopts the Bible as the rule of faith in so practical a form, that the reading of the

Scriptures, according to a fixed calendar, is made the imperative duty of all her ministers on every occasion of public devotion.

For these reasons we may easily understand why this is the only reformed Church which has enjoyed the blessing of stability, and presents at this day a spectacle of unity and order, which we may look for amongst the sects in vain. Not only is she, preëminently, the Church of the Bible, and the firm opponent of all the dangerous innovations brought in by the Church of Rome, but she is guarded and defended by the system of government and worship inherited from the first pure ages of Christianity, under the sanction of the inspired Apostles, who had the sole authority to plant the earthly Kingdom of the Saviour in that form which may be properly considered divine. And hence, the Church of England is no mother of Sectarianism, although she abhors the Romish tenet of persecution, and tolerates a variety of religious sentiment which she cannot approve.

For while she stands firmly on the primitive foundation, she puts no restraint on human liberty. Though she cannot herself be "blown about by every wind of doctrine," yet she looks, not with indignant wrath, but with kind commiseration, on the strifes and divisions of all around her. Faithful to the precept of the Apostle, "Bless, and curse not," she fulminates no anathemas against any,¹ but on the contrary, offers her constant and humble supplications "for all sorts and conditions of men," and "more especially" for the "*Holy Church Universal* ; that it may be so guided and governed by the Holy Spirit, that *all who profess and call themselves Christians* may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life." And thus she pursues her celestial path, claiming for herself no infallibility save what she derives from the primitive Creeds, founded on the unerring Word of God ; pronouncing no judgment

¹ Except against the Liberalism condemned in Article XVIII.

on the final state of those who differ ; immovable by the storms of political commotion, the bitter temper of bigotry, or the wild excesses of fanaticism ; and only intent on the fulfillment of her divine Master's will, in charity and peace.

And hence this Church, though strongly and unalterably opposed to the usurpation of the Pope, and to all the false doctrines of Romanism, is ready to acknowledge that the Creeds of the ancient faith still remain in that corrupted communion. While Rome curses England as heretical, England prays for Rome that she may be "led into the way of truth." And while Rome will not permit a single congregation of England to hold public worship within her walls, England permits Rome to establish her hierarchy in every quarter without restraint, and carries to the widest extent the rule of religious freedom.

In accordance, therefore, as I humbly trust, with the spirit of that highly privileged Church to which it is my happiness to belong, I have withdrawn my former charge that the Pope is the great Antichrist of Scripture. It is a charge for which the Church has given me no authority whatever, in her standards of doctrine ; and I retract it willingly, as a duty to justice and to truth.

But this does not bring me any nearer to the Church of Rome, because it leaves untouched all the real grounds of the British Reformation. In every point that properly belongs to our controversy with Rome, I stand precisely where I have always stood, and have no idea that I shall ever see any occasion to change my judgment. I hold *ex animo* the doctrine of our Thirty-nine Articles, and have devoted the best years of my life to a thorough examination of the Fathers, the Councils, and the history of the Church, as they are given to us by the writers of Rome herself. And no future study can alter the conclusions defended in my former publications, because none of them were taken on trust, but were the results of long and laborious investigation.

And hence, I am quite unable to regard, with the slightest confidence, the notion of some learned and excellent men, who think that the Church of England may be reunited with the Church of Rome, by the means of *mutual explanation*. The course adopted, with this view, more than twenty years ago, in the famous Tract No. 90, was one which I could not then, and cannot now, reconcile with any rule of reasonable consistency. Nor am I able to perceive the smallest sign of change in the Church of Rome, either of principle or practice, to indicate an abandonment of her false and perilous innovations upon her own original creed; although it must be by this abandonment alone that our reunion with her could possibly be justified.

Yet I sympathize, as every Christian heart must sympathize, in the desire for the reunion of Christendom. I offer, in its most comprehensive sense, the admirable prayer of our Liturgy, "that *all* who profess and call themselves Christians, may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life." The Divine Redeemer prayed for the unity of the Church, on the night before His Crucifixion. St. Paul rebuked the divisions amongst the Corinthians, and charged them to be of the same mind and the same judgment. Unity was preserved, in the main, for eight hundred years, and the rending of that unity by an act of schism was held to be a sin which should be classed with the rebellious act of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

But Satan succeeded in deluding the minds of Christians, and brought in by degrees many corruptions in doctrine, discipline, and worship, until at last the great schism between the East and the West was completed by the assumption of the Papacy. And after that time, the Church of Rome added more and more to her mournful list of errors, until in the sixteenth century, the mercy of God awakened the Reformers to a sense of their duty to His truth, and the right was claimed to purify the Church,

by casting off the accumulated mass of novel superstitions and priestly despotism, and restoring the Bible to its proper place, as the only divine rule of faith and practice. This act of reformation, as it was conducted in the Church of England, did indeed separate her from her outward union with the Church of Rome. But it gave her a far more perfect conformity with the Primitive Church, which was truly Catholic ; and it made her what she is at this day, — both in herself and her offspring in the United States, — the best representative of the *original* Catholic Church throughout the world.

Twelfth Chapter.

Thoughts on the Reunion of Christendom.

THAT the author of evil continued to practise on his successful maxim, "Divide and conquer," amongst the Reformed, is unhappily but too apparent in the present state of Christendom. The primitive system of government and worship was lost amongst the sects, and the Calvinistic division especially, adopted by the Continental Reformers, has multiplied to more than a hundred varieties. Yet still, through the overruling power of the Almighty, the fundamental principle of the Gospel — faith in Christ, and reverence for the Bible as the Word of God — has remained at least among the orthodox, even where the Apostolic order of its original administration has passed away.

Union, under these circumstances, though it must always be an object of desire and prayer with the Christian heart, seems to be utterly unattainable, until the Lord Himself shall appear again in the majesty of His glory. We are in the last days, when perilous times have come. And the language of the Divine Redeemer gives us no hope of any great improvement, before the final consummation. For has He not said, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"¹ Did He not declare that, "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed

¹ St. Luke xviii. 8.

them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot ; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded ; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. *Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.*"¹ Such is the sad picture of the last days, set before us by Him who alone seeth the end from the beginning. And it agrees most thoroughly with the views of the Fathers, which we have quoted concerning the prophecies on the subject of the great Antichrist, whose coming will be preceded by a general decline of all true faith, and an awful increase of immorality and wickedness.

And assuredly the "signs of the times" are not calculated to encourage any brighter hopes of the world's condition, at the close of the present dispensation. For what government in Christendom is guided by the Word of God? What nation exists, that is not ready to go to war in defense of its commercial profits? What people can be found, the majority of whom are consistent followers of the Divine Redeemer? And how few there are amongst those that call themselves Christians, whose lives can bear a comparison with the zeal and devotion of the Church in the early ages of the Gospel?

It is reported by those who have examined into the religious condition of New York, that all the houses of worship in that great city, including every denomination, do not afford seats enough for more than one fourth part of the inhabitants! Yet they are probably never seen all filled at once; and it is very certain that if they were, the men who are actual professors of religion would form a small minority in almost every congregation. Now the city of New York is the wealthiest in the land, and yields the palm to no other, either in Christian enterprise, or in generous liberality. But does her piety keep pace with

¹ St. Luke xvii. 26-30.

her progress? Does zeal towards God bear any proportion to zeal for politics, zeal for business, zeal for extravagant display, zeal for amusement, and zeal for indulgence in all the lower appetites of human nature? How does the scale incline, when we look for the purity of legislation? How stands the question with regard to the increase of crime? How much of religious principle is found in her systems of education? How much of practical faith and godliness is seen in the circles of private life? Alas! the answers to these and questions like these, must be in mournful accordance with the picture of Christian degeneracy in the last days, which is set before us in the pages of Inspiration!

But these very facts are doubtless thought to furnish the strongest motive for the union of Christendom. In union is strength; and division is weakness. The maxim is true enough, as a general proposition, in theory. In practice, however, it amounts to nothing with respect to religious unity, because it is impossible for the Church to expect a blessing from God, if she sacrifices any portion of His truth to the mere dictates of expediency. And it is quite unlikely that the sects would abandon their distinctive principles, so as to form any union which deserves the name. The only real union among Christians must be the fruits of faith, in which both the heart and the head can act in concord; for, in the language of Scripture, "How can two walk together unless they be agreed?" The notion of some good men, therefore, that a Christian union can be formed, in which all may *walk together* while they continue to disagree in their respective sentiments as much as ever, seems to my mind an amiable delusion, which, if seriously reduced to action, will make new divisions amongst those who were once agreed, and be found in the end to involve an utter absurdity.

Yet the desire for union amongst all the believers in the Divine Redeemer may still be cherished, and our prayer for

them all may still be offered, as it should be, in the spirit of faith and love, because it is the desire and prayer of our Lord Himself, which will be fulfilled after the tribulation and misery predicted in the times of Antichrist shall have passed away, and the Almighty Conqueror shall have destroyed the kingdom of Satan by the brightness of His coming. Then, but not till then, all discord and strife will be banished forever. Then, Israel will be gathered from their dispersion throughout the earth, and bend, in penitence and faith, before the throne of their celestial King. Then, the Gentiles of every clime and nation will unite in the chorus of adoring praise to Him who washed them from their sins in His own precious blood. And then the prayer of hope and charity will be granted by the perfect union of every mind and heart, in the full light of heavenly truth, and the bliss of everlasting glory!

How far we are still removed from that sublime consummation, no man can tell. For myself, I confess that I have more respect for the old tradition adopted by the Fathers in the Primitive Church, than I am able to feel for any modern theory. Six thousand years were then believed to have been allotted from the Fall of Adam to the restoration of the world under the Lord Jesus Christ. If the ordinary chronology be correct, we should now be one hundred and twenty-nine years from the period of His second coming. But there is no certainty in that system of chronology, which can authorize a precise calculation. And as the impossibility of predicting the day of our own death is a powerful argument to make the Christian always ready, so the doubtfulness of all the periods assigned to the end of the present dispensation should guard us against the danger of being wise in our own conceit, and remind us of the duty and the privilege of living in the exercise of that pure and child-like faith, which commits this and every other event to the wisdom and love of our Divine Redeemer.

Thirteenth Chapter.

Our Relations with the other Apostolic Churches.

It should be at all times, but especially now that I am drawing so near to the end of my earthly course, a most important question, How ought I to regard my Christian brethren, whether they belong to the Churches of the East, or the Church of Russia, or the Church of Rome, or to the numerous and respected congregations of Protestants, with whom I do not hold communion?

I am fully persuaded that the Church to which I belong has been truly reformed, according to the Scriptures, and the pattern of the first pure Church founded by Apostolic inspiration, and is therefore worthy of entire confidence. And of course I cannot enter into union with those errors of faith, government, or worship which she rejects. But in what spirit shall I apply the principle? Beginning, for example, with the Oriental Churches, may I shut my eyes to the fact that the Church of Greece and the Church of Russia hold the same original Creed, and the same liturgical worship, and the same Episcopal government, which I also hold? If the Oriental Churches have unhappily added to the pure primitive system the great error of praying to the Virgin, and insist on the advantage of monastic vows, and confine their bishops to the state of celibacy, and pay a certain reverence to the pictures of the saints, and administer the Eucharist with a spoon, containing the consecrated bread and wine together, instead of the distinct reception of the Cup instituted by our Lord, must I take it for

granted that, by reason of these abuses, they have no faith in Christ, and have forfeited the promise of Salvation? Surely not. These are indeed grievous errors, in which I cannot conscientiously partake; but I desire, notwithstanding, to think of them and pray for them as *brethren in Christ*, not because I am indifferent to their errors, which I repudiate, but by reason of the truth which they still retain. For faith in Christ is the only requirement for salvation which is strictly essential. So long as this remains, there is a bond of spiritual affection and affinity, which no error in minor matters can destroy. And therefore, while I am forbidden to have fellowship with error, I can honor the truth, and regard them, for the truth's sake, with all kindly feeling.

And the same argument applies even to the Church of Rome, though she far exceeds the Oriental Churches in the sad corruptions of her system. For there is the monstrous usurpation of the Pope, claiming to be the sole vicar of Christ, and denying salvation to all who refuse to obey him. There is the worship, though in an inferior sense, of the Virgin and the Saints, going quite beyond the Eastern Churches. There is the prohibition of marriage, not confined to the Bishops, but including also the priests, the deacons, and the sub-deacons, besides the monks and the nuns. There is not only the doctrine of transubstantiation, but the shameful taking away of the Cup from the laity, and from all except the officiating priest. There is the enforced practice of the secret Confessional, to which every soul is obliged to submit before he is allowed to receive the Sacrament. There is the imaginary power of Indulgences, by which the Pontiff undertakes to pardon the temporal punishment of all sins, even before they have been committed. There is the invention of Purgatory, from the fire of which the Pope and the priests are supposed to give relief to the souls of the departed. There is the doctrine of persecution professed as a duty, and practised for ages in its

most awful forms of blood and slaughter, the dungeon and the stake. There is a yearly anathema pronounced against all heretics, in which they include every individual that does not belong to their own communion. And there is the claim of infallibility, which ties them fast to all these corruptions, and sets the dogmas of their faith practically above the Word of God. In fine, so numerous and so grave are the mournful abuses of the Church of Rome, that the notion of being reunited to her before she has abandoned her grievous errors, has always seemed to me a marvelous solecism, on the part of any member of the Reformed Church of England; and I have regarded the efforts, made in that direction, by some eminently learned and good men, as a mystery, far too deep for my humble understanding.

Yet all is not error, even in the Church of Rome. For she still retains the ancient Catholic Creeds; the Apostolic government of Bishops; and the original form of liturgical worship derived from the divine system of the chosen people; she still holds all the articles of the faith; the inspiration of the Scriptures; the Fall of man by the temptation of the devil; the doctrine of the Trinity; the Incarnation of the Son of God; His obedience and atoning sacrifice upon the Cross for the sins of the world; the mission of the Holy Spirit, and His work of grace in changing and sanctifying the heart, and guiding the Apostles in their vast labor of planting the Church — the kingdom of Christ — throughout the earth; the resurrection of the dead; the future judgment, the condemnation of the wicked, and the eternal felicity of the redeemed: — in a word, the whole circle of revealed truth is still to be found in the Church of Rome, as it is with ourselves: and therefore, notwithstanding all her subsequent and perilous corruptions, superstitions, usurpations, and persecutions, the members of that Church are still our brethren in Christ by virtue of the common faith, though we cannot have any religious fellowship with them until they renounce their errors.

It may seem, to many Protestant minds, a hard thing to look on Romanism with any charity. But surely we are as much bound to acknowledge the good as to condemn the evil. The Church of Rome is a compound of the primitive truths which she received from the Apostles, with the subsequent falsehoods brought in by the subtlety of Satan and the superstitious weakness of the human heart. We can have no union with her while those falsehoods are retained; and yet we can and ought to acknowledge, with candor, the pure and Scriptural doctrines which she still maintains with constancy. I grant that she regards us as heretics, and brands us with her anathema. What then? The Saviour commands us to love our enemies, to bless those that curse us, and to pray for those who spitefully use us and persecute us: ¹ and He set us a glorious example, when, on the Cross, He interceded even for His own murderers, saying, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." How much more may we pray for those whose errors, however gross, are at least held along with the adoration due to His divine Majesty, and a firm faith in His mercy as the Redeemer of the world.

And this is the more easy for us, when we remember the change which the aspect of the Church of Rome presents at the present day. Her professed *principles*, indeed, are the same that they have been since the thirteenth century; and she cannot renounce them so long as she clings to her false assumption of infallibility. But the manifestation of those principles is largely modified by the force of circumstances. The old system of persecution has practically passed away. The Pope carries on no war for his religion. The Inquisition tortures its unhappy victims no longer; and heretics are not burned, as formerly, at the stake. Indeed, the great mass of the Roman Catholics are so profoundly ignorant of their own Church History, that when they are told of the doings of past ages, they reject the statement as utterly false, and regard it as a Protestant calumny.

¹ St. Matt. v. 44.

And hence, we see how this change of circumstances has produced a correspondent change of feeling. England now deems it safe to repeal her former laws against them, to admit them to her Parliament, to maintain their Irish College at Maynooth, and to grant them the widest field of encouragement and toleration. And in this land of religious freedom, where there never was any thing like persecution since the time of the stern old Puritans in Massachusetts, we should be quite inexcusable if we failed to regard the Church of Rome in a spirit of candor and of justice, ready to acknowledge in her all that is good, while we condemn and carefully abstain from all that is evil.

Thus, then, I hold that our charity and our prayers should include the Church of Rome, when we repeat the beautiful supplication of our own Liturgy for the "Church Universal, and for all conditions of men." We know not how far it may please God to answer that prayer even in our own day. We do know, however, that a multitude of Romanists became reformed in Europe, three centuries ago, and it is at least a possible thing that multitudes more may yet follow the example. But be this as it may, I cannot doubt that the prayers of Christian charity and hope must always be profitable, if not to the souls of others, yet to our own; since, in the offering of such prayers, we are at least endeavoring to imitate the perfect pattern of our Lord and Saviour.

Fourteenth Chapter.

Our Relations with the Protestant Sects.

THE argument of the previous chapter may be applied with much less difficulty to the various sects of our orthodox Protestant brethren, whose errors are those of defect and not those of superstition, being in the opposite direction from the system of Romanism, and presenting no serious antagonism to the Creed which we profess, although they are not in the habit of repeating it.

But the difficulty which renders it impossible to unite with them consists in this, namely, that they reject the government laid down for the Church of Christ by the inspired Apostles, and also the primitive system of liturgical worship, under the erroneous idea that both of these, being found in the Church of Rome, should therefore be classed among the corruptions of Popery.

And this, truly, is a strange mistake to be made by Christian men, with the open Bible in their hands. For they cannot be ignorant that the same Almighty Being who was the God of the Jews, is also the God of the Gentiles; that Christ, in His human nature, was a Jew; that His Apostles were all Jews; that the first Christian Church was formed by the Holy Spirit in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost, and consisted entirely of Jews. And how can they doubt that the system then adopted should naturally be expected to conform, in as many respects as possible, to what the same God had already given to His chosen people Israel?

Hence we read that our divine Redeemer worshipped in

the Synagogue and in the Temple, and gave to His own disciples a form of prayer, which He commanded them to use. Hence we see that the threefold order of the Ministry in the Church of Israel, consisting of the High Priest, the Priests, and the Levites, was followed substantially under the Gospel dispensation, being, as we may reverently believe, established in honor of the divine Trinity. For the Saviour Himself, the great High Priest, appointed the Twelve Apostles and the Seventy Disciples; and when He departed into Heaven, the Apostles occupied the highest position in the Church on earth, the presbyters or elders taking the second place, and the deacons being soon added in the third. Before St. Paul's departure, we see him appointing Timothy at Ephesus, and Titus in Crete, to exercise the Apostolic functions in governing, ordaining, and judging the presbyters or elders; and the ancient note at the end of the Second Epistle to Timothy states that this Timothy was the *Bishop* of Ephesus; while a similar note to the Epistle to Titus calls him the *Bishop* of the Cretans. It is certain, from the testimony of the early Fathers, that what St. Paul did in this respect was done by the other Apostles; so that at their decease the Church was everywhere under the government of bishops, with their priests and deacons. And so it continued to the Reformation in the sixteenth century, and still continues in every Apostolic Church, precisely as we have it in our own.

But the Continental Reformers, not having any bishops on their side, were compelled to go on without them, and devise a new form of government, which, of course, was destitute of any Scriptural authority, and therefore merely human; whereas the primitive system is divine, because the Apostles, being the commissioned agents of the Lord, had the Holy Spirit to direct them. If those Reformers had made this arrangement merely as a provisional one, until bishops could be obtained, it would have been excusable on the principle of necessity. But, unfortunately,

it was left in such a shape that their successors fell into the mistake of thinking it an improvement, and even began to oppose Episcopacy as a Popish abuse, because they saw it in the Church of Rome. Nay, although their most learned authors admitted that it was universal in the Primitive Church in the third century, four hundred years before the time of Popery, yet they did not hesitate to call it a usurpation, against all the evidence of the Scriptures and of the Christian writers of that early day.

Thus it was, that when the bishops of the Reformed Church of England had both the power and the will to give the true system of Apostolic government to their brethren on the Continent, the followers of Calvin and the rest were in no humor to receive it : preferring, willfully, to reject the only authorized plan established by the Holy Spirit, and insisting on their own views of order, in open hostility to that which was really the Divine Constitution.

Here, therefore, we have the main cause for their multiplied divisions and their lack of stability. Here we may perceive why a new sect can be so easily formed among them, by any man who possesses sufficient boldness, tact, and popular eloquence to undertake it. And here, also, we see why we cannot consistently unite with these seceding brethren, nor acknowledge them as lawfully authorized to act in the sacred ministry of the Church. For we all know the consequences of seceding from an earthly government. We all admit the duty and even necessity of supporting the settled Constitution of the land. How much more, as the members of the Church of Christ, must we be bound to sustain the government of His earthly kingdom, and guard that Constitution which we know to be divine !

But this unhappy departure of the Protestant sects from the system of Apostolic government, though sorely to be lamented, does not prevent my acknowledging that they have done a large amount of good in preaching the truth of the everlasting Gospel. Their zeal, their talents, their

self-devotion, and their success, I am always ready to admit, notwithstanding the fact that they are still so hostile. Their enmity against the Church was exhibited very sadly in Old England, when, under the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell, they banished her Bishops, Priests, and Liturgy, as they supposed, forever. The same enmity was manifested in New England, in the golden age of Puritanism, when the Episcopalians, though belonging to the Established Church in the mother country, were denied all their own religious privileges, and obliged to pay a fine if they presumed to absent themselves from the Congregational meeting. Those zealous men, indeed, at that day, proved themselves quite willing to adopt the Popish rule of persecution. For they made it a law of the Colony of Massachusetts to exclude the priests of Rome, to whip the Baptists at the carts' tail, to banish the Quaker preachers, and to hang them if they dared to return. And under that law, four were actually hung in Boston, some of whom were women. Poor Roger Williams, though acknowledged to be a man of sterling piety, was exiled in the dead of winter, and would have perished if he had not been protected by his Indian friends, who, savages as they were, exhibited more feeling than his Christian brethren could display. And so severe was the spirit of these pious Pilgrim Fathers, that Charles the Second was compelled to interfere, and enforce, for the future, some fair degree of religious toleration.¹

All this, however, belongs to the spirit of a bygone age, and should only be remembered as a wholesome proof that even those whom many supposed to be the saints of the earth, were ready to persecute, even unto death, as the Church of Rome had done before them. And therefore we should learn from such examples a lesson of charity towards the weakness of poor human nature, under the subtle temptations of that evil spirit who taught the Romanists to burn heretics "for the glory of God," and

¹ See Neal's *History of the Puritans*.

led the Puritans to banish the Baptists and hang the Quakers for the same reason. Alas! how often is the student of history obliged to mark, with wonder and with grief, the acts of cruelty and blood, perpetrated in the supposed service of the merciful Redeemer? How often must he reflect in amazement on the subtlety of Satan, who can persuade even Christians to accept his blackest counsels, as if he were an angel of light!

But yet these melancholy facts, with much more of the same character, should never be allowed to chill our kindly regard towards any portion of the great family of Christ. I cannot unite, indeed, with the various sects, who have seceded from the only authorized Constitution of the Church, and who condemn that which, as being the work of the inspired Apostles, they ought to follow. But I can admire their zeal, their active energy, and the exquisite tact which they exhibit in the management of popular feeling. I can honor their virtues, and acknowledge that their personal piety, for aught I know, may be far superior to my own. I can praise the genius and the learning of their authors. I can cordially include them in the constant prayer of the Church, that "all who profess and call themselves Christians may hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and in righteousness of life." And in my private supplications, I can implore the Divine Redeemer to guide and prosper all who love and serve Him in sincerity and truth, whatever their ignorance, their prejudices, or their errors may be, in minor points of duty.

Fifteenth Chapter.

Conclusion.

I HAVE now stated frankly my own views with respect to the unity of Christendom. Perfectly persuaded as I am, after a long and laborious examination, that the system of the Church to which it is my highest privilege to belong, presents, on the whole, the most truthful copy of the Primitive and Apostolic Church of the early and the purest ages, I cannot unite with any other which makes unauthorized and corrupt additions to the faith, or refuses to acknowledge the ancient Creeds, or rejects the Apostolic forms of government and worship, or denies the authority of the sacred Scriptures as the standard of doctrine. And I am equally persuaded that there is no scheme of unity worthy of the slightest confidence, but that which shall honestly go back to the principles of the Primitive Church, when she was united, three hundred years before Popery began its perilous innovations ; since that is the true source from which we can alone derive the great and leading rules of the Gospel dispensation.

For what other standard can those modern denominations regard with equal reverence ? If the Church in that early day was united, — which no one can dispute, — and if it is now split up into more than a hundred divisions, how is it possible that it can be united again except by returning to its original condition, before the work of division began ? That was the course laid down by the Reformers in England. And if all the rest had adopted

the same, the whole of the Reformed would have presented a grand and consolidated host, powerful enough to conquer Popery, and put infidelity to shame, and influence the hearts of millions who have been kept aloof by Christian dissension and strife, and bring them to acknowledge the grace, the concord, and the love which should still mark, as they did in the beginning, the disciples of the blessed Redeemer.

But this only true course will not be taken, save by thoughtful and intelligent individuals, who will continue to come, as many thousands have come already, to share our privileges. Rome and the various sects will doubtless go on as they have done; and instead of seeing the old divisions disappear, it is far more likely that new ones will start into activity, until the enemy has succeeded in diffusing a general indifference, or rather an infidel disgust, to all religion, and in thus producing the great apostasy, which is to precede the coming of Antichrist. The "signs of the times" assuredly seem to point in that direction. That fearful result, however, may still be distant for some generations. A multitude of souls may still remain to be gathered into the Redeemer's fold, before "the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled." And meanwhile it is our duty to labor in our appropriate field, and do, with persevering zeal, all that can be done, with the blessing of God, to lighten the gloom and stay the progress of degeneracy.

While I cannot look forward to any closer union with corrupted Churches, or with the hundred Christian sects, I trust that our Church, the only one in the land reformed on Apostolic and primitive authority, will be enabled to preserve her own unity, which is the duty especially committed to us, in the providence of our Almighty Redeemer. True it is, that she allows a large amount of indulgence to the varieties of sentiment and feeling. True it is, that of this variety we have quite enough; and I cannot deny that

it is displayed with a recklessness, at times, which is certainly no proof of individual charity or wisdom. But these extravagances only serve to prove the substantial strength of our fundamental principles. No party has yet appeared, — and I do not dread that any will ever appear, — who would give up the Bible, the Prayer-Book, or the Episcopate, in the wild attempt to restore the lost unity of Christendom. The Church of England and her American daughter are firmly wedded to LAW AND ORDER; and however a few well-meaning but wrong-headed enthusiasts may desire to draw them into an entangling alliance with Popery on the one hand, or sectarianism upon the other, the main body of our clergy and laity will always be found loyal to the controlling rules of Scriptural faith and primitive Catholicity, by which the special favor of Heaven guided the British Reformation.

And if, under these circumstances, the Church must continue to stand alone, why should we complain? The Church of Israel stood alone for fifteen centuries. Was it any the less the Church of God? The Church of Christ in Jerusalem stood alone, yet the Lord added to it “daily such as should be saved;” and in the course of two hundred years from the death of St. John, the doctrine of that Church conquered the heathenism of the Roman Empire.

But the impossibility of restoring union to Christendom, and the necessity of guarding against all invasion of what we know to be the truth, yield no argument for the slightest injustice, unfairness, or lack of benevolent feeling towards our Christian brethren. If we are forced to remember the points in which we differ, we are also bound to remember the far more essential points in which we agree. And while it is our duty to maintain and defend the form with which the first pure Church of the Redeemer was invested, it is none the less our duty to do so without bigotry or bitterness, in the spirit of charity and kindness, in constant prayer for the whole Israel of God, and in the confident

hope that all true believers, who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, however they may now be divided on earth, will be united at last in heaven.

For, notwithstanding the errors, the corruptions, the warfare, and the strifes which the subtlety of Satan has brought into the fold of the Redeemer, the living faith in Christ constitutes a bond of spiritual brotherhood, which neither the malice of our great enemy nor the folly or wickedness of men can destroy. Thus, in the relations of this life, we know that the children of the same father may quarrel and separate ; they may misinterpret his will, and deny its plain provisions, and contend in bitterness and hatred about their supposed rights ; and yet, in despite of all this, their relationship as brethren remains, and cannot be denied without an evident absurdity.

How much more shall Christians acknowledge that, since a true and living faith in the Divine Redeemer, sealed in our baptism, makes us the adopted sons and daughters of the Almighty Creator, we must be brethren by virtue of that spiritual relation ! And therefore, although we may not expect, in these last degenerate and evil days, that outward union will be restored before the end of this dispensation, yet we may and ought to remember that the same Saviour died for us all ; that the same God, for His sake, regards us as His children ; and that even in our strongest denunciations of error, the spirit which animates our hearts should be in harmony with the wondrous pity and love of our Lord, when He uttered on the Cross that gracious supplication : " Father, forgive them ; they know not what they do."

[The following "Extracts" occur, in the original manuscript, immediately after the close of the treatise on *Anti-christ*. There is sufficient connection to make their insertion proper here, though the "notes" and "observations" are specially valuable as indicating the freedom of criticism which is allowable in the case of the Homilies. — EDITOR.]

Extracts from the Homilies,

WITH NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS.

[The Edition of the Homilies referred to is that printed at Baltimore in 1823.]

The following passage from the Homily *Against the Peril of Idolatry* is worthy of attention : —

You will say, peradventure, these things pertain to the Jews. What have we to do with them? Indeed, they pertain no less to us Christians than to them. For if we be the people of God, how can the Word and Law of God not appertain unto us? St. Paul, alleging one text out of the Old Testament, concludeth generally for other Scriptures of the Old Testament as well as that, saying, Whatsoever is written before — meaning in the Old Testament — is written for our instruction; which sentence is most specially true of such writings of the Old Testament as contain the immutable law and ordinances of God, in no age or time to be altered, nor of any persons of any nations or age to be disobeyed.¹

In the Third Part of this Homily,² there is a strong

¹ Homily *Against Peril of Idolatry*, p. 167.

² *Ibid.* p. 211.

censure against the lighting of candles before the *images of the Saints*. But the Preface, published in 1562 by Queen Elizabeth's authority, is sufficient proof that this passage could not have been understood as applying to candles lighted on the Altar as a symbol of Christ's being the Light of the world, because it is certain that the Queen had this usage in her Royal Chapel kept up constantly. The same limitation appears on page 213, in the burning of incense, "which is forbidden strictly by God's Word to be given to images." Incense burned in honor of God is right; but burned in honor of any other it is idolatry.

The same argument is strongly put on page 221, where the worship of images is denounced as "damnable idolatry."

The Third Part of the Homily *Against Peril of Idolatry*¹ displays a rich vein of puritanical feeling against the sumptuousness of churches, vestments, etc., treating the Mosaic system as "allowed of the Lord" (whereas it was *commanded* expressly), and treating it only as a figure, etc. This, however, is a quotation from Jerome, the advocate of monasticism, but evidently is quite in accordance with the mind of the Homilist. On page 238, the writer calls Rome a "harlot," and compares her sumptuousness to that of "the great strumpet of all strumpets, the Mother of Whoredom," in the Revelation. Yet he does not say that Rome is that Mother, but only that she resembles her. And in the following page he recurs to the decking of images as "a token of Antichrist's kingdom," according to Daniel; and inveighs against the priests, in gorgeous attire, falling down before them and offering incense to them. And he concludes as follows:—

True religion then, and pleasing of God, standeth not in making, setting up, painting, gilding, clothing, and decking of dumb

¹ Homily *Against Peril of Idolatry*, pp. 235-239.

and dead images, — which be but great puppets and babies for old fools, in dotage and wicked idolatry, to dally and play with, — nor in kissing of them, capping, kneeling, offering to them, incensing of them, setting up of candles, hanging up of legs, arms, or whole bodies of wax before them, or praying and asking of them or of saints, things belonging only to God to give. But all these things be vain and abominable, and most damnable before God. . . . Let us have no strange gods, but one only God, who made us when we were nothing, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who redeemed us when we were lost, and with His Holy Spirit doth sanctify us. . . . Let us honor and worship for religion's sake none but Him; and Him let us worship and honor as He will Himself, and hath declared by His Word, that He will be honored and worshipped; not in nor by images or idols, which He hath most strictly forbidden; neither in kneeling, lighting of candles, burning of incense, offering up of gifts, unto images or idols, to believe that we shall please Him — for all these be abomination before God; but let us honor and worship God in spirit and in truth, fearing and loving Him above all things. . . . And such worshippers were Abraham, Moses, David, Elias, Peter, Paul, John, and all other the holy Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, and all true Saints of God; who all, as the true friends of God, were enemies and destroyers of images and idols, as the enemies of God and his true religion.¹

In the next Homily, for *Repairing and keeping Clean and comely Adorning of Churches*, we read that, —

As touching the other point, that Solomon's Temple was a figure of Christ; we know that now, in the time of the clear light of Christ Jesus, the Son of God, all shadows, figures, and significations are utterly gone, all vain and unprofitable ceremonies, both Jewish and Heathenish, fully abolished. And therefore, our Churches are not set up for figures and significations of Messiah and Christ to come; but for other godly and necessary purposes; that is to say, that like as every man hath his own house to abide in, to refresh himself in, to rest in, with such like commodities; so Almighty God will have His house and place whither the whole parish and congregation shall resort; etc.² . . . The fountain

¹ Homily *Against Peril of Idolatry*, pp. 245-247.

² Homily *For Repairing, etc., Churches*, p. 250.

of our regeneration is there presented unto us; the partaking of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ is there offered unto us; and shall we not esteem the place where so heavenly things are handled? ¹

I should like to see the man who should be bold enough to read aloud in church pages 289 and 290, being part of the Homily *Against Excess of Apparel*.²

Rightly opposing prayers addressed to the departed Saints, the Homilist admits that they do pray for us of their own accord: or at least, he will not deny it.³

The Homily *Of the Place and Time of Prayer*, argues very inconclusively about the state of the departed, and does not state St. Augustine's opinions fairly.⁴

So on the times of prayer, he denies that the first Christians kept the Jewish Sabbath; whereas there is proof that for some time that was kept, as also the Lord's day, and there is no reason to doubt that the Sabbath was strictly retained by the Jewish Christians.⁵

Liberal teaching on the Sacraments, but not correct on

¹ Homily *For Repairing, etc., Churches*, p. 251.

² For instance, such a passage as this: "What else dost thou, but settest out thy pride, and makest of the undecent apparel of thy body, the devil's net, to catch the souls of them which behold thee? O thou woman, not a Christian, but worse than a paynim, thou minister of the devil! why pamperest thou that carrion flesh so high, which sometime doth stink and rot on the earth as thou goest? Howsoever thou perfumest thyself, yet cannot thy beastliness be hidden, or overcome with thy smells and savors, which do rather deform and misshape thee, than beautify thee;" etc.

³ Homily *Concerning Prayer*, p. 303.

⁴ Homily *Of the Place and Time of Prayer*, pp. 310, 312.

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 315.

the point of the laying on of hands in absolution, which the Homilist says is the *visible* sign.¹

Erroneous teaching on the plurality of wives permitted to the fathers of the Old Testament, which the Homilist calls a "special prerogative." He also says that Pharaoh, king of Egypt, gave Hagar to be the bondmaid of Sarah.²

Before Christ's coming into the world, all men universally were nothing else but a wicked and crooked generation, rotten and corrupt trees, stony ground, full of brambles and briers, lost sheep, prodigal sons, naughty and unprofitable servants, unrighteous stewards, workers of iniquity, the brood of adders, blind guides, sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death; to be short, nothing else but children of perdition, and inheritors of hell-fire.³

The Homilist seems to have forgotten all the eminent saints of the Old Testament.

While Christ was yet hanging on the Cross, and yielding up the ghost, the Scripture witnesseth that . . . the graves did open, and the dead bodies rise."⁴

A mistake ; for this resurrection was not till after Christ Himself had risen.

God "*would not be pacified*, but only with the blood of His own Son."⁵ And again, sin "*did violently, as it were, pluck God out of heaven*, to make Him feel the horrors and pains of death." Both of these are very strange expressions.⁶

¹ Homily Of Common Prayer and Sacraments, pp. 328, 329.

² Homily Of the Information of Certain Places of the Scripture, p. 345.

³ Homily Of the Nativity, p. 379.

⁴ Homily Of the Passion, p. 396.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 397.

How stands the Homily *Against wilful Rebellion* with the *War of the Revolution*?¹

The Pope, in the same Homily, is called "the Babylonical beast of Rome."² This is the last of the Homilies, yet nowhere is the Pope called the *great Antichrist*.

¹ Homily *Against Wilful Rebellion, etc.*, pp. 518, etc., 524, 525, 535, 536, 537, 546, 547.

² *Ibid.* p. 560.



